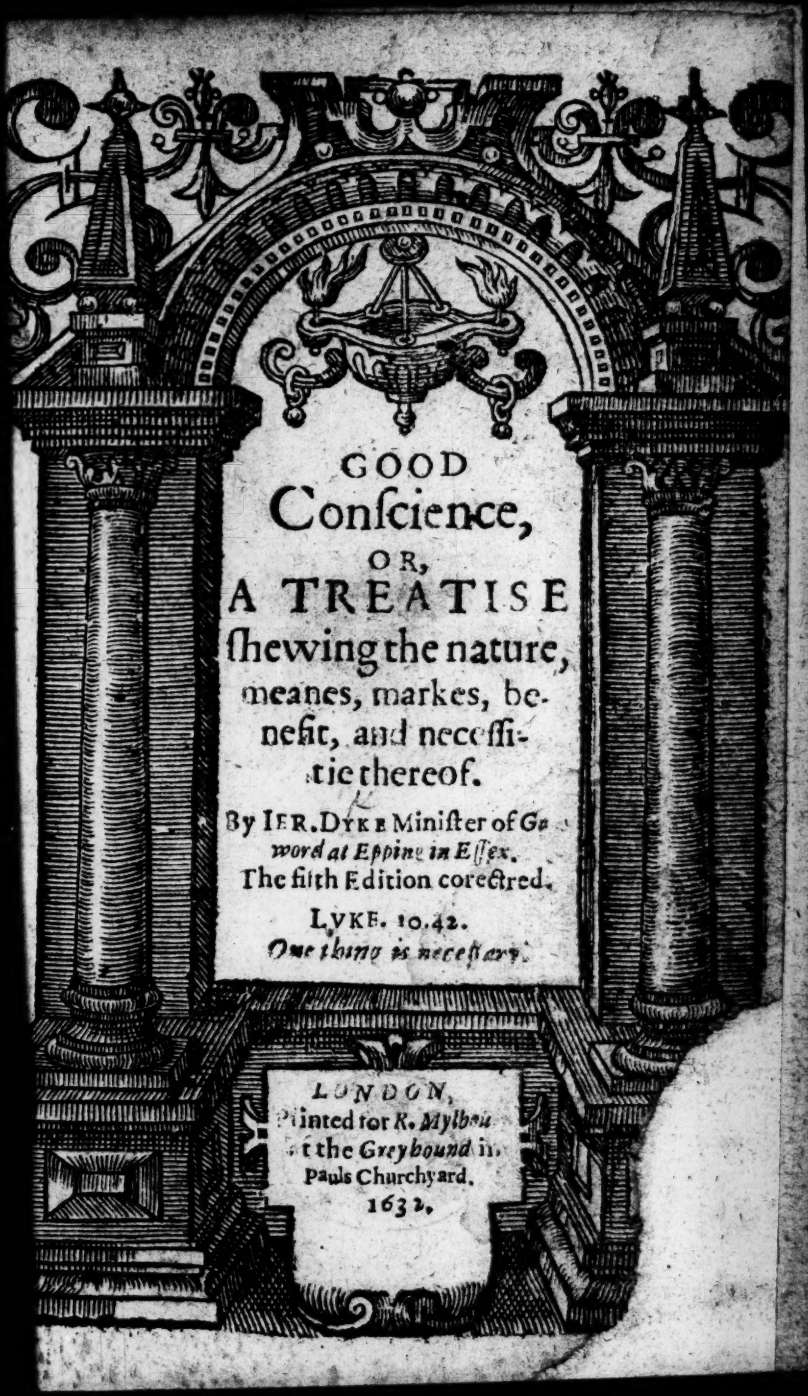

GOOD Conſcience,

OR,

A TREATISE

ſhewing the nature, meanes, markes, benefit, and neceſſitie thereof.

By IER. DYKE Miniſter of *Godword at Epping in Eſſex.*

The fifth Edition corrected.

LVKE. 10.42.

One thing is neceſſary.

LONDON,
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1632.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE RIGHT VVORSHIPFVL

Sr. FRANCIS BARRINGTON Knight and Baronet, a Patron and patterne of piety *and good Conſcience.*

RIGHT WORSHIPFVL,

THat which the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks of a mans deſire of the office of a Biſhop, may be truely ſpoken of every one who deſires to gaine men to the love of a

good Conſcience, that *he deſires a worthy worke*: Yea it is the worke which is, and ought to bee made the ſcope and drift of the worthy worke of the Miniſtry. And therfore it is, that he, that deſires the calling of the Miniſtery, deſires a worthy worke, becauſe of this worthy worke of bringing men to good Conſcience, A worke at which all workes and bookes, ſhould ſpecially ayme: Conſcience is a book, one of thoſe books that ſhall be opened at the laſt day, and to which men ſhall be put, and by which they ſhall be iudged. Therefore to the directing, informing, and amending of this booke ſhould all other bookes ſpecially tend. Yea *Salomon* ſeems to call men off from all other bookes,

Vnicuique liber eſt propria conſcientia, & ad hunc libri diſcutiendum & emendandum omnes alii inuenti ſunt. Bern. de Conſ.

bookes, and ſtudies, to the ſtudy of this ſo neceſſary a point, the keeping of a good Conſcience: *Of making many bookes,* (ſaith hee) *ther is no end, & much ſtudy is a wearineſs of the fleſh; Let vs hear the concluſion of the whole matter, Feare God & keepe his Commandements, for this is the whole duty of man.* As if his advice tended to this, to neglect all ſtudies in cõpariſon of that ſtudy which aimes at the getting and keeping of a good Conſcience. It would be exceeding happie with vs, if this ſtudie were more in requeſt amongſt us. Wee ſeeme to live in thoſe dayes fore-told by the Prophet, wherein *the earth ſhould bee filled with the knowledge of the Lord.* We are bleſſed that live in ſo cleare a Sun-ſhine of Gods

Eccl. 12. 12. 13.

Iſa. 11. 9.

truth, but yet the griefe is, that through our owne default, our Sun-ſhine is but like the winter light, all light, little or no heate, and we make no other uſe of our light, but onely to ſee by, not to walke and worke by. In the firſt re-entrance of the Goſpell amongſt us, how devout, holy, zealous, and men renowned for Conſcience were our Martyrs, and our firſt Planters, Preachers, and profeſſors of Religion? They had not generally the knowledge and learning, the world now hath, nor the world now the Conſcience they then had. There be now better Scholars, there were then better Men: they were as excellent for Deuotion, as our Times are for Diſputation

Antiqua ſapientia nihil aliud quã faciendã & vitanda præcepit, et tunc longe meliores erant viri. Poſtquam docti prodierunt, boni deſunt. Simplex enim illa et aperta virtus in obſcuram et ſolertem ſcientiam verſa eſt, docerumque diſputare, non viuere, Sen. epiſt. 95.

tation. It is an excellent ſight to ſee ſuch Chriſtians as were the Romanes; *Full of goodneſſe, filled with all Knowledge.* It is pitty that ever ſo lovely a paire ſhould bee ſundred. Yet if they be parted, it is beſt being without that which with moſt ſafety may be ſpared. A good Conſcience is ſure to doo well, though it want the accompliſhment of Learning, and greater meaſures of Knowledge and Vnderſtanding. But take Learning from a good Conſcience, and it is but a Ring of gold in a Swines ſnout, or that which is worſe, *A thorne in a Drunkards hand.* Learning is to bee highly apprized; Riches, Honours, and all other earthly bleſſings are vile to it. But yet though it take

Rom. 15. 14.

Prou. 26. 9

place

place of all other things, yet muſt it give good Conſcience the wall and vpper-hand, as that which is farre before it in worth, vſe, and neceſſitie. As *Salomon* of wiſdom, ſo may it beee ſaid of good Conſcience, *Shee is more pretious then Rubies, and all the things thou canſt deſire are not to bee compared to her.* Prou 3.15 Gold and Rubies cannot ſo enrich a man as good Conſcience doth, and yet alas the blindeneſſe of men, how willing are they in this caſe, with *a willfull povertie?* Not Rubies, but handfulls of Barley, morſels of Bread, and Cruſts are preferred before the invaluable treaſure of a good Conſcience.

After the many worthy endeauours therefore of ſo many as have

have bin before me in this worke of labouring men to a good conſcience : I have adventured alſo to lend my weake ſtrength to the ſame worke. If one or two witneſſes prevayle not, yet who knowes what an whole *cloud* may doe? Though *Eliah* and *Eliſha* be the *Horſemen and Chariots of Iſrael*, yet the Footemen doe their ſervice in the Battell, and *Apollo* may without offence *water*, where *Paul* hath *planted*.

Now theſe my poore endeavours ſuch as they are, I am bold to publiſh vnder your Worſhipfull name, and to put them forth vnder your patronage, entreating you to countenance that in a Treatiſe, which you have ſo long countenanced in the practiſe

tiſe. None ſo fit to bee a Patron of a Treatiſe of good conſcience, as he that hath beene a religious both profeſſor, and protector of the practiſe thereof. To have a Iſa. 22. 25. *Naile faſtened in a ſure place, the antiquitie* of a long ſtanding *Name*, and *Family*, to bee hewen out of the Quarry of the beſt Stockes of Parentage, to have faire Lines, and a faire lot in outward poſſeſſions, to be bleſſed with a fruitfull Vine, and Olive plants, fairly growne and planted round about a man, all theſe are to be held high honours, and great favours from the God of heaven. And with all theſe hath the Lord honoured your ſelfe. But yet your greateſt honour that hath given luſtre to all the reſt, hath beene your

your love to the Truth, Religion and a good Conſcience. *Auguſtine* repented him that hee attributed more to *Mallius Theodorus*, to whom he wrote a booke, then he ſhould have done though otherwiſe hee were a learned and Chriſtian man. A man may eaſily overſhoote himſelfe in the commendation of a good man, eſpecially, if a great man. It ſhall ſuffice therefore to have ſaid ſo little, and that to this end, that hereby, the World may know the reaſon of my choice of your Patronage of this Treatiſe. It would have beene an incongruity to have had the name of a perſon of an evill Conſcience, prefixed before a booke of good Conſcience. I deſired a Patron ſutable

Diſplizet autem illic quod Mallio Theodoro, *ad quem librum ipſum ſcripſi, quamvis docto et Chriſtiano viro plus tribui quam deberem.* Aug. *Retr. lib.* 1. *cap.* 2.

ſutable to my ſubiect. I preſume the very ſubiect ſhall make the Treatiſe welcome to you; Be you pleaſed to afford your acceptance, as I will afford you my poore prayers, that the Lord who hath already ſet vpon your head the *crowne of the Elders, Childrens Children*, and one *crowne of glory* here on earth, *Age found in the wayes of righteouſnes*, would alſo in his due time give you that incorruptible *crowne of righteouſneſſe, and eternall glory* in the heavens, which that righteous Iudge ſhall give to you, and to all thoſe that in the waies of a good Conſcience waite for the bleſſed appearance of the Lord Ieſus.

Pro. 17. 6.

Pro. 16. 1.

Your Worſhips in all
Chriſtian obſervance:
IER: DYKE.

The Contents of this Treatise.

The Text containes three Maine Heads.

1. *Maine head.* Pauls *Protestation of a good Conscience, where fine things are considered.*

1. *What Conscience is.*

2. *What a good Conscience is. It is good with a two fold goodnesse.*

1. *With the goodnesse of Integritie, and this integritie is threefold.*

1. *When being rightly principled by the word, it sincerely iudges and determines of good and evill.*

2. *When it doth excuse for good, and accuse for evill.*

3. *When it urges to good, and restraines from evill.*

2. *With the goodnesse of Tranquillitie, and Peace. Here are three sorts of Conscience discovered not to bee good, viz.*

1. The Ignorant
2. The Secure
3. The Seared
} Conſcience.

3. The meanes of getting and keeping a good Conſcience.

1. To get and keepe the Conſcience good peaceably, or with the goodneſſe of peace, three things required,

1. Faith in Chriſts blood.
2. Repentance from dead works
3. The cõſcionable exerciſe of Prayer.

2. To get and keepe the Conſcience good with the goodneſſe of integritie, and to have it vprightly good fiue things required, viz.

1. Walking before God.
2. Framing ones Course by the Rule of the word.
3. Frequent examination of the Conſcience.
4. Hearkning to the voice of Conſcience.
5. In caſes of queſtionable nature, to take the ſureſt and the ſafeſt ſide.

4. *The markes, and notes of a good Conſcience: and they be ſeven.*

1. *To make Conſcience of all ſinnes and duties.*
2. *To make Conſcience of ſmall ſinnes, and duties.*
3. *To affect a Miniſtery that ſpeakes to the Conſcience.*
4. *To doe duetys, and avoid ſinne for Conſcience ſake.*
5. *Holy Boldneſſe.*
6. *To ſuffer for Conſcience.*
7. *Conſtancy, and Perſeverance in Good.*

5. *The Motiues to a good Conſcience, and they are fiue.*

1 *The incomparable Comfort and Benefit of it in all ſuch Times and Caſes, as all other Comforts faile a man, and wherein a man ſtands moſt in need of Comfort. The Caſes or Times are fiue.*

1. *The Time, and case of Disgrace, and Reproach.*

2. *The Time of Common feare, and Common Calamity,*

3. *The Time of Sickenesse, or other Crosses.*

4. *The Time of death.*

5. *The Time and day of Iudgement.*

2. *That a good Conscience is.*

1. *a feast for*
   1. *Contentment and satisfaction.*
   2. *Ioy and Mirth.*
   3. *Society.*

2. *Better then a feast for*
   1. *The Continuance.*
   2. *Independency.*
   3. *Vniversalitie.*

3. *Without a good Conscience, all our best duties are naught.*

4. *It is the Ship and Arke of Faith.*

5. *The*

5. *The misery of an evill one* { 1. *In this world in respect of* { 1. *Feare.* 2. *Perplexity.* 3. *Torment.* ; 2. *In the world to come.*

2. *Maine Head.* Ananias *his insolent Injunction. Whereout is observed.*

1. *What is the respect a good Conscience findes in the world.*

2. *The impetuous injustice of the Enemies of good Conscience.*

3. *Who commonly bee the bitterest Enemies of good Conscience.*

4. *That Vsurpers are Smiters.*

5. *What is a sad fore-runner of a Nations Ruine.*

3. *Maine Head.* Pauls *Answer and Contestation. Whereout is observed.*

1. *That Christian Patience muzzels not a good Conscience from pleading its owne Innocency.*

2. *The severitie of Gods Iudgements upon the enemies and smiters of good Conscience.*

3. *The equity of Gods administration in his execution of Iustice.*

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A Table of the ſeuerall Chapters of this Treatiſe.

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Good

GOOD CONSCIENCE.

ACTS 23.

1. *And* Paul *earneſtly beholding the Councell, ſaid, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good Conſcience vntill this day.*
2. *And the high Prieſt* Ananias *commanded them that ſtood by, to ſmite him on the mouth.*
3. *Then ſaid* Paul *vnto him, God ſhall ſmite thee thou whited wall.*

CHAP. I.

The Introduction to the Diſcourſe following.

THere is no cõplaint ſo generall as this, that the world is naught. His experience is ſhort and ſlender, which will not juſtifie the truth of this complaint

plaint. And what thinke we, may the Cauſe be of the generall wickednes of our Times? Surely nothing makes *Ill Times*, but Ill men, and nothing makes *Ill men*, but *Ill Conſciences*. Ill Conſcience is the ſource, and fountaine from whence comes all iniquities, which make times here ſo ill. How well ſhould hee deſerve that could amend ill times? There is a courſe if it would be taken, that would do the deed, and ſo ceaſe the common complaint. *Eliſhaes* courſe in healing the waters of *Iericho* muſt be taken. They ſaid of their waters, as we of our times, *The water is naught, and the ground barren*, 2 Kings 2.19. What courſe now takes *Eliſha* for healing of the waters? *Hee went out unto the ſpring of the waters, and caſt the ſalt in there.* ver. 21. *So the waters were healed*, verſ. 22. The ſpring and fountaine of all actions good or evill is the Conſcience, and all actions and courſes of men are as their Conſciences. Out of the heart *are the iſſues of life.* Prov. 4.23. the heart and Conſcience

Hominum ſunt iſtæ nō Temporum. Senec ep. 98

ſcience is the fountaine, every action of a mans life is an *Iſſue*, a little rivelet, and a water paſſage thence. Are theſe *waters* then that *iſſue* thence *Naught*? The way to heale them is to *caſt the ſalt into the ſpring*. Mend the Conſcience and all is mended. *Good Conſciences* would make *Good men*, and *Good men* would make *Good Times*. Lo here a project for the reformation of evill Times.

Non erit fructus bonus niſi arboris bonæ. Muta cor, et mutabitur opus, Aug de ver. Dom. Serm. 12.

Were this Project ſet on foot, and a good cõſcience ſet up, how ſhould we ſee profanation of Gods holy Name, & Day, injuſtice, Bribery, Oppreſſion, Deceit, Adulteries, and whoredomes, & all other Iniquities, how ſhould we ſee all theſe as our Saviour ſaw Satan, *falling downe like lightning from heaven*? How ſhould we ſee them come tumbling downe like ſo many *Dagons*, before Gods Arke, yea tumbled downe, and broken to the ſtumps? The onely Arke that muſt daſh, and ding downe theſe *Dagons*, is a good Conſcience,

And if we would wel weigh the matter

ter what is there equally deſirable with a good Cõſcience? What is that men would have, but they deſire to have it *good*? And yet amongſt al other things they deſire to have *Good*, what little care to have the Cõſcience ſuch? Wife, children, ſervants, houſes, lands, Ayre, food, raymert, who would not have theſe *Good*? And yet that without which none of all theſe are good, nor will yeeld us any true good, that alone is neglected, and whileſt men would have all other things *good*, yet their cõſciẽces & thẽſelves are *naught*. Now alas, what good, will all other goods do vs whilſt this one, and this maine *Good* thing is wanting! How excellẽt is this *Good* above al other good things. A *good* wife, *good* children, *good* land, &c. theſe may a man have, & yet he himſelfe not *Good*, theſe finde men ſometimes *Good*, but make none ſo; theſe goods may a man have and yet himſelfe bee naught. Not ſo with good Conſcience, which no evill man can have, which whoſoever hath, it makes

Ecce quid prodeſt plena bonis arca cum ſit inanis Conſcientia! Bonæ vis habere, & bonus non vis eſſe, tum quid eſt, quod vis habere malum? Nihil omnino, non vxorem, non filium, non ancillã, villam, tunicã poſtremo nõ caligam et tamen vis habere malam vitam. Rogo te, præpone vitam tuam, caligæ tuæ (ſic Conſcientiam) Aug *ibid. vbi ſupra. ipſæ ergo diuitiæ bonæ ſunt, ſed iſta omnia bona*

makes him and all hee hath *good*. So great and ſo good a *Good*, why is it ſo much neglected?

Try we therefore & let us aſſay if by any means, Gods good bleſſing giving aſſiſtance, we may be able to ſtirre up men, and to worke them to regard ſo great & ſo excellent a good. It may be at leaſt ſome few may be perſwaded, & may ſet vpon this worke of getting a good Conſcience. If but ſome few, if but one be wrought vpō, the labour is not in vaine. If none, yet our worke is with our God, to whom *we are a ſweet ſavour, in Chriſt, in them that are ſaved, & in them that periſh*, 2. Cor. 2. 15

a bonis & malis habere poſſunt. Et cū bona ſint bonos tamen facere non poſſunt. Aug. *de verb. Do. Serm. 5.*

This portion of Scripture then which I have choſen for the ground of the following Diſcourſe conſiſts of three parts.

1. *Pauls* ſober and ingenuous *profeſſion*, and *Proteſtation*, verſ. 1.
2. *Ananias* his inſolent, and impetuous *Iniunction*, verſ. 2.
3. *Pauls* zealous *Anſwer* and *Conteſtation*, verſ. 3.

1. The

1. The firſt is *Pauls Proteſtatiō* in theſe words; *Men and brethren I have lived in all good Conſcience vntill this day.* With this Proteſtation of a good conſcience *Paul* begins his Plea. And how ever to diſtinguiſh our ſelves from Papiſts, we beare the name of *Proteſtants*, yet wee ſhall never be found and good Proteſtants indeed, till we can take up *Pauls Proteſtation*, that our care, indeauour, & courſe is to live in *All good Conſcience*. A Proteſtant with a looſe & a naughty Cōſciēce hath no great cauſe to glory in his deſertion of the Romiſh Religion. As good a *blind Papiſt*, as a *halting Proteſtant*. The *blind* & the *halt* were equally abominable unto the Lord.

Paul was here brought forth to anſwer for himſelfe before the chiefe Prieſts and the Counſell: And his Preface, as I ſaid, to his intēded Apology, if he had not bin injuriouſly interrupted, is a *Proteſtation* of the goodnes of his Conſcience, and this his good Conſcience, or the goodneſſe of his Conſcience he ſets forth;

1. From

1. From his *Conuerſation* πολίτευμαι, I have lived or converſed. A good converſation is a good evidence of a good Conſcience indeed, there can be no good Conſcience, where there is not a Converſing in good. It is not ſome moods & fits in ſome good actions, & duties, from whence conſcience gaines the reputation of goodnes; but a good converſation, godly & religious in the general tenour therof, proves the conſcience worthy ſuch an honor, as to be holden good. He may be ſaid to *haue a* good cõſcience that can be ſaid to *liue* in a good Conſcience, Many a man is frequent in the Citie, and yet cannot be ſaid to live there. There a man lives where he hath his Converſe and Reſidence. A mans life is not to be meaſured by ſome few actions, in which at ſometime he may be found, but by his generall courſe & converſation. God wil judge every man not according to his *ſteps*, but according to his *waies*. It were over-rigid cenſoriouſneſse to cõdemne a righteous man, & to queſtion whether

whether his cõſcience were good; becauſe ſome ſteps of his have bin beſide the way. We know for the general, his way is good where in he walkes, and therefore according to his good way wee iudge his Conſcience good. Contrarily when we ſee a mans way for the generall to be evill, though ſometime hee may tread a right ſtep or two, and chance to chop into the faire road for a rod or two, for this to iudge a mans Conſcience good, were a bottomleſſe and a boundleſſe Charitie: Every mans Conſcience is as his life is.

2. From the *Generalitie* of his care, & obedience, *In all good Cõſcience*. It muſt be *All good*, or it is *no good* conſcience at all. There be that live in *ſome* good Conſcience; yea *Herod* ſeemes to have *much* good Conſcience, hee did many things gladly, but yet *Paul* goes further, and lives not in *ſome*, not in *much*, but in *All* good Conſcience.

3. From the *Sincerity*, and *Integritie of it before God*. Before men how many have their Conſciences exceeding good

good, and yet their conſciences are far ſhort of goodnes, becauſe they are not good *before God*, the iugde of conſcience: Whilſt conſcience is made only of the Capitals of the ſecond Table, or of the externals and ceremonials of the firſt, which duty is not done out of obedience to God and his Commandements; but a mans ſelfe either in his gaine, or in his prayſe is ſought, and baſe ends are the firſt mouers to good duties, here the conſcience, what ever applauſe it hath from, or before men for it goodneſſe; yet, of God ſhall not be ſo eſteemed. For that is not a good conſcience which is one outwardly, but which is one inwardly, whoſe praiſe is not of men but of God. And that hath its praiſe of God which is before God.

4. From his *continuance, & conſtancy, vntill this day*. To begin a good life, and courſe, & to liue in all good conſcience, & that before God, are excellent things; but yet one thing is wanting to make vp this goodneſſe com-

pleate. To bee ſo for a day, or ſome dayes will not ſerve, but when a man can ſay at his laſt day, I have liued in al good conſcience *vntill this day*, that man may be ſafely iudged to have a good conſcience indeed. Thus in theſe foure particulars doth the goodnes of *Pauls* conſcience appeare. It is not my purpoſe to cõfine my ſelfe & to keepe mee within thoſe bounds alone: but to take a larger latitude, within the compaſſe whereof I will bring both thoſe forenamed, and all other materiall points which this *proteſtation* doth afford.

Chap. II.

Conſcience deſcribed.

THe maine ſubiect of this proteſtation, and the ayme of this following diſcourſe being concerning a *good conſcience*, for the more orderly handling thereof, conſider theſe ſpecialls.

1. What

1. What *Conſcience* is.
2. What a *good conſcience* is.
3. How a good conſcience *may bee gotten and kept*. The meanes of it.
4. How a good conſcience *may bee knowne*. The markes of it.
5. The *motives* to get and keepe a good conſcience.

1. *What conſcience is*: It may be thus deſcribed. Conſcience *is a power and faculty of the ſoule taking knowledge, and bearing witneſſe of all a mans thoughts, words & actions, & accordingly excuſing or accuſing, abſolving or condemning, comforting or tormenting the ſame.* I know there be other definitions given by others more ſuccinct, and neat, but I rather chuſe this though it may bee not altogether ſo formall to the rules of Art. The rules of love and profit many times may make bold to diſpence with rules of Art. So I may be profitable, I care the leſſe to be artificiall. It may ſuffice that this deſcription is anſwerable to that Auditory for whoſe ſake it was firſt intended. A plaine familiar

deſcription agrees well enough with ſuch a people. For the better conceiving of it, let it be taken in pieces, and every parcell viewed ſeverally.

It is a facultie or power of the ſoule. It is therefore caled the *Heart*, 1. *Iohn.* 3. 20 *If our heart condemne vs. Ec.* 7. 22. *Thine own heart knowes that thou thy ſelfe likewiſe haſt curſed others*, that is, thine own conſcience knowes. It is alſo called the *ſpirit of man*, 1. *Cor* 2. 11. *For what man knowes the things of a man, ſave the* ſpirit of man *which is in him.* And *Rom.* 8. 16. *The ſpirit it ſelfe beares witneſſe with our ſpirit*, that is, with our conſcience. Not that conſcience is a ſpirit diſtinct from the ſubiect of the ſoule, as *Origen* miſtooke, but becauſe it is a faculty of the ſoule, therefore the name that is oft given to the ſoule, is given to it. If it be asked in what part of the ſoule this facultie is placed, we muſt know that conſcience is not confined to any one part of the ſoule: It is not in the underſtãding alone, not in the memory, will, or affections alone, but it hath

place

place in all the parts of the ſoule, and according to the ſeverall parts thereof hath ſeverall Offices, or acts.

Taking knowledge: *Eccl.*7.22. Thine owne heart *knowes*. Conſcience is placed in the ſoule, as God's ſpy, and mans ſuperiour and overſeer, & inſeparable companion that is with a man at all times, and in all places, ſo that there is not a thought, word, or worke that it knowes not, and takes not notice of. So that that which *David* ſpeakes of God himſelfe. *Pſal.*139.3.4. *Thou compaſſeſt my heart, and my lying downe, and art acquainted with all my waies, for there is not a word in my tongue, but loe thou knoweſt it altogether. Whither ſhall I goe from thy ſpirit? If I aſcend vp to heaven, &c.* The ſame may be alſo ſaid of cõſcience, Gods deputy; it is acquainted with al our wayes, not a motion in the minde, nor a ſyllable in the mouth, to which it is not priuy: yea it is thus inſeparably preſent with us not only to ſee, but alſo to ſet downe, to regiſter, and to put downe vpon Record all our

thoughts, words, and workes, Conſcience is Gods Notary, and there is nothing paſſes vs in our whole life good or ill, which cõſcience notes not down with an indeleble character, which nothing can raze out but Chriſts blood. Conſcience doth in this kind as *Iob* wiſhes in another, *Iob* 19.23.24. *Oh that my words were now written, Oh that they were printed in a booke, That they were graven with an iron pen, and laid in the rocke for ever.* Conſcience prints, & writes ſo ſurely, ſo indelebly, yea it writes mens ſins as *Iudah* his ſinne was, *with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond, and they are graven vpon the Table of their hearts, Ierem.* 17.1. Conſcience doth in our pilgrimage as travellers in their iourney, it keepes a Diary, or a iournall of every thing that paſſes in our whole courſe, it keepes a booke in which it hath a mans whole life pend. In regard of this office conſcience is placed in the memory, & is the Regiſter and Recorder of the ſoule.

And bearing witneſſe. This wee finde

Rom. 2.15.

Nam quocunque me verto vitia mea me ſequuntur, vbicunq; vado conſcientia mea me non deſerit, ſe præſens adſtitit, & quicquid facio ſcribit. Idcirco quanquam humana ſubterfugiã iudicia iudicium propriæ conſc. fugere non valeo: Et ſi hominibus celo quod egi, mihi tamen (qui noui malũ quod geſſi) celare nequeo. Ber de Inter. Com. c. 31

Rom. 2. 15. their conſcience alſo *bearing witneſſe*. *Rom.* 9. 1. My conſcience alſo *bearing me witnes*. 2. *Cor.* 1. 12. *This teſtimony* of our conſcience. And this the end of the former office of the conſcience. For therefore it is exact and punctuall in ſetting downe the particulars of a mans whole life, that it may bee a faithfull witneſſe eyther for him, or againſt him. *For a faithfull witnes cannot lie. Pro.* 14. 5. This office it is ready to doe, at all times of triall, affliction, and moſt of all at the laſt day, the day of iudgement, when it ſhall be more ſolemnly called in to give in evidence, *Rom.* 2. 15. 16. *Their conſcience bearing witnes, &c. In the day whē God ſhall iudge ſecrets of men.* At that day it ſhal eſpecially witnes either for or againſt a man, if our life and actions have been good, it will then doe like the true witneſſe, *Pro.* 14. 25. *A true witnes delivers ſoules.* If wicked & ungodly, it wil deale with it as *Iob* complaines God did with him *Iob.* 10. 17. *Thou reneweſt thy witneſſe againſt me.* It will teſtifie according to every

Peccata mea celare non poſſum, quoniam quocunque vado conſc. mea mecum eſt, ſecū portans quod in ea poſui ſive bonum, ſive malum, ſervat vivo, reſtituet defuncto depoſitum quod ſeruandum accepit. Bern. med. de vot. c. 14

very mans deeds. And this teſtimonie of conſcience is without all exception, for in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word ſhall ſtand, and conſcience (as our common ſaying is) is a thouſād witneſſes: for it is an eye-witneſſe of all our actions, yea a pen-witnes, bringing teſtimonie from the authentique Records & Regiſter of the Court of Conſciēce. Concerning this teſtifying office of Conſcience that place is worth the noting, *Eſa.* 59.12. *For our tranſgreſſions are multiplied before thee & our ſins teſtifie againſt vs, for our tranſgreſſions are with vs, and as for our iniquities we know them.* By which place wee may know the meaning of the word Conſcience. Conſcience is a *knowledge together*. How together? Firſt, a knowledge together with another perſon, namely with God, when God and a mans heart know a thing, there is Conſcience, knowledge together *Rom.* 9.1. My conſcience (συμμαρτυρούσης) Co-witneſſing, witneſſing together. How together? God knowes it & wit-

witneſſes, and my conſcience together with him knows & witneſſes. Secondly a knowledge ioyned together with another knowledge; for there is a double act of the vnderſtanding, Firſt, that whereby wee thinke or know a thing. Secondly, there is a reflecting act of the ſoule whereby wee thinke what we thinke, and know what we know, and this is the action of the Conſcience; and this ioyning of this ſecond knowledge to the firſt, gives it the name of Conſcience: As here in this place, As for our iniquities wee know them, that is, we know that wee have had evil thoughts, and our knowledge tels vs, & witneſſes to vs, that we have done ſo. This agrees with *Bernards* definition, that *Conſcientia eſt cordis ſcientia*; Conſcience is the knowledge of the heart, namely paſſiuely. It is the knowing of what the heart knowes: which others in better tearmes have expreſſed thus, Conſcience is the recoiling of the ſoule vpon it ſelf; Suitable to that of the Apoſtle, 1. *Cor.* 4. 4. *I know*

know nothing by my ſelfe. As if he had ſaid, I know not any thing that I know againſt my ſelfe, my Conſcience doth not witneſſe againſt mee. And this ſecond office of Conſcience in bearing witneſſe is alſoin the memory.

And accordingly accuſing or excuſing, abſolving or condemning] Theſe acts of Conſcience we finde *Rom.* 2. 15. *Their thoughts accuſing or excuſing one another. Rom.* 14. 22. Happy is he that *condemneth* not himſelf in that he allows. The ground of theſe acts is this; Conſcience, before actions are to be done, determines of their lawfulneſſe, & vnlawfulneſſe; iudges of them whether they be good or evill. And if it iudge them good, it inuites, ſtirres vp, vrges, and bindes to the doing of them *Rom.* 13. 5. Ye muſt be ſubiect *for conſcience ſake*; that is, becauſe Conſcience determines it to be good, & vrges, & binds thereunto. Hence that phraſe in common ſpeech, my conſcience vrgeth me to it, or he was vrged in conſcience to do it, and I am bound in conſcience to doe

do it. Certainely if it iudge and determine actions to be evill and vnlawfull, then it binds from them. So much that ſpeech implies, 1 *Cor.* 10.27. Eate, aſking no queſtion, *for conſcience ſake.* So that Conſcience hath a power to bind to, and to bind from.

Now then when a man in his particular actions doth follow the Preſcriptions, Dictates, Iniunctions, Prohibitions, & Determinations of conſcience, and hearkens to the incitements therof, then cõſcience *excuſes* him, acquits and *abſolves* him. But if in his actions he goe againſt any of theſe, then Conſcience *accuſes* him of offence, and *condemnes* him for that offence. The *accuſation* of cõſcience hath reſpect vnto a mans *guilt*, the *condemnation* of it vnto a mans *puniſhment*. *Accuſation* is an act of Conſcience paſſing ſentence vpon a mans action, as when conſcience tels him; This was ill done, this action was ſinfull. *Condemnation* is an act of conſcience, paſſing ſentence not onely vpon a mans action, but vpon a mans

mans perſon, as when it tels him, Thou deſerveſt Gods wrath for this ſin. Cõſcience in accuſing ſhewes what is the *quality*; in condemning what is the *deſert* of a mans action. And theſe actions of Conſcience are in the mind, & vnderſtanding part of the ſoule. The act of Conſcience in the memory determines *de facto*, and tels vs what we have done, or not done. The act of Conſcience in the vnderſtanding determines *de iure*, and tels vs whether we have done well or ill, and ſo accordingly either excuſes or accuſes, acquits or condemnes.

Comforting or tormenting the ſame] theſe be the laſt acts of conſcience following the former. If Conſcience determining, preſcribing, & inciting to good, be hearkned vnto, then it excuſes, acquits, and thereupon followes comfort, ioy, hope, 2. *Cor.* 11. 2. This is *our reioycing*, the teſtimony of our conſcience. Contrarily, if the dictates of conſcience be not regarded, it accuſes & condemnes, & then torments with feare,

feare, griefe, deſpaire, and violent perturbations, in all which is that *worme. Marke.* 9.44. And theſe actions of the Conſcience are in the will, and in the affections. And thus according to the divers parts of the ſoule, the acts and office of conſcience are divers. In the memory it hath the office of a Notary, Regiſter, and Witneſſe. In the underſtanding it hath the office of a Iudge, and an accuſer, of a *Felix* and a *Tertullus*. In the affections either of a Comforter, or Tormenter.

Sic in domo propria & a propria familia habeo accuſatores, teſtes, iudices, & tortores, Accuſat me conſcientia teſtis eſt memoria, voluntas carcer, timor tortor obiectamentum tormentum. Bern. med de vot. c. 13

The ſumme of all may be thus knit up. Conſcience contains three things:

1. Knowledge practicall.
2. Applicatiõ of that knowledge to our particular eſtates, and actions.
3 Thoſe affections, which ariſe thereupon.

Now the ſpeciall worke of Conſcience conſiſts in the ſecond, in the applying our knowledge to our eſtates and actions. Now in this application it lookes on things paſt, or preſent, ſimply as things, and ſo it witneſſes of them

them to be done, or not done, *Eccl.* 7. 22. Or elſe it lookes at the good or evill of things paſt, preſent, & to come. if things paſt, or preſent, ſeeme good, it excuſes; if evill, it accuſes and bites, *Rom.* 2. 15. If things to be done ſeeme good, it excites, vrges, and bindes to the doing thereof. If evill, it vrges, and bindes there-from. Now according to theſe ſeverall acts there follow in vs divers affections, ioy, hope, feare, griefe, and the like. The whole proceſſe of the worke of Conſcience fals within the frame of a practicall Syllogiſme, as for example.

Every one that ſins in betraying innocent blood, is worthy of Gods wrath. But I (ſaith Iudas) *haue ſinned in betraying innocent blood, therefore I am worthy of Gods wrath.*

Here the *Maior* is knowledge practicall, the rule and law by which Conſcience keeps her Court. This is *Synteresis.*

The

Super nos etiam poſuit ad cuſtodiendum ſi deliquiſſent qui accuſarent, qui teſtificarentur, qui iudicarent, qui punirent: conſc. quippe eſt accuſatrix, memoria teſtis, ratio iudex, timor carnifex. Bern. hom de vill. in q.

Conſcientia Synteresis eſt qua vitii voluptatibus vel furore ipſaq; interdum rationis decepti ſimilitudine nos peccare ſentimus. Hieronym. in Eccl. cap. 1.

The *Minor* that is *Syneideſis*, the proper worke of conſcience applying that knowledge, and generall rule for a mans particular eſtate, or action. Here Conſcience witneſſes concerning the fact, iudges of the qualitie of it, and accordingly accuſes or excuſes.

The Concluſion is the ſentence of Conſcience abſolving or condemning, and accordingly cheering or ſtinging, comforting or tormenting a man.

Syntereſis eſt promptuarium principiorũ ſeu regularum practicarum eius officium eſt regulas legis divinæ proferre, & conſc. ſubminiſtrare, vt illarum ope poſſit cenſorem agere de propriis actionibus. Alſted. Theol. Caſ. cap 2.

Chap. III.

A good Conſcience what it is: falſe ones diſcovered.

WHat Conſcience is we have ſeene; The ſecond thing conſiderable, is what a good Conſcience is. The Conſcience that is good, muſt bee good with a double goodneſſe.

1. With the goodneſſe of *Integritie.*
2. With the goodnes of *Tranquility.*

Vpright-

Vprightneſſe, and Peace; theſe two are required to the cõſtitution of a good Conſcience.

Firſt, it is good with the goodneſſe of *Integrity*, when it is an upright conſcience. This is that which *Paul* cals *A pure cõſcience*, 2 *Tim.* 1.3, which phraſe a man would almoſt thinke in his conſcience that the holy Ghoſt uſed on ſet purpoſe, to ſtop the mouth of the iniquity of the later times, that ſhold ſeeke to diſgrace all good Conſcience with the ſarcaſme of purity. Now the Conſcience is good with the goodneſſe of Integritie and puritie three wayes.

1 When it being informed & rightly principled by the word of God, the only rule and binder of Conſcience, it doth truely and ſincerely iudge & determine evill to be evil, and good to be good. As contrarily, the conſcience is ſinfully evil, when it doth not determine that to be euill which is evil, nor that to be good which is good, but cal evill good, and good evill. Such as are the

the Conſciences of Ignorant perſons, who wanting the knowledge of Gods Word, and having their conſciences blinded through ignorance, are not able to iudge of good or evill, nor to diſcerne & determine which is which, So that knowledge is neceſſarily required to the goodnes of Conſcience. *Rom.* 15.14. *Ye alſo are ful of goodnes, filled with all knowledge.* The Conſcience cannot be good where the ſoule is naught, and *that the ſoule bee without knowledge, it is not good.* Prou. 9.2.

2. When it doth excuſe for that which is good, and accuſe for that which is evill, being ſanctified by the ſpirit of grace: for the accuſation of conſcience, though it follow vpon ſin, yet it is not ſinfull, and evill in it ſelfe, but onely painefull and troubleſome, and ſo oppoſed to the goodnes of peace, not to the goodnes of vprightnes, according to that trite diſtinction of *Bernard* of a good Conſcience and not quiet, and a quiet conſcience, and not good. It is the property of a conſcience vpright-

ly good to accuſe vpon any ſinne committed. As contrarily the conſcience is ſinfully evill, when it doth not excuſe for good, nor accuſe for evill. The ſuperſtitious perſon, omitting his fopperies, ſhould bee excuſed by his conſcience, whereas he rather receives blame from his Conſcience, therefore his Conſcience is ſinfully evill. The ſecure perſons Conſcience is naught, becauſe he having committed ſinne, his Conſcience is ſilent, and lets him alone, and brings in no accuſation againſt him, therefore it is ſinfully evill. It is a *witneſſe* that hath *ſeene*, and *knowne* evill, and doth not *vtter it*, therefore it *ſhall beare its iniquity*, Leuit. 5. 1.

3. When it doth incite and vrge vs to doe good, and doth ſtay and hinder from evill. It is vprightly good when it ſpurs to good, and bridles from evil. *Heb.* 13. 18. *For wee are aſſured that we have a good Conſcience*: viz. A conſcience that is neither ſilent to perſwade to that which is good, or diſſwade frō that which is evill. If a man goe about

or

or be ready to yeeld to any thing that is sinfull, how will it muster vp legions of Arguments? how will it wrastle & struggle with a man? It will say as *Abner* to *Ioab*, 2 *Sam.* 2. 26. *Knowest thou not that it will be bitternes in the later end?* or as *Abigail* to *David*, 1. Sam. 25. 31. *It shall bee no griefe, nor offence of heart vnto thee* another time, not to have done this evill. If a man be negligēt, or careleſſe, & drowſie in good duties, it comes to him with that voyce, *Epheſ.* 5. 14. *Awake thou that ſleepeſt*; or with that, *Iſa.* 30. 21. *This is the way, walke in it.* When it doth thus, it is vprightly good. Contrarily, it is ſinfully evill, when it doth not incite vs to that which is good, nor hinder vs from doing evill. This is a dead, and a ſeared conſcience. 1. *Tim.* 4. 2. *Having their conſciences ſeared with an hot yron.*

2. It is good with the goodneſſe of *Tranquility*. And that is when the conſcience is at peace, and doth not accuſe vs, becauſe it hath not wherewith to accuſe vs, either becauſe not guilty of

ſuch or ſuch a particular fact. 1. *Cor.* 4. 4. *I know nothing by my ſelfe*; or elſe becauſe it is aſſured of pardon, in the blood of Chriſt, by which wee come to have no *more Conſcience of ſins*, Heb. 10. 2. That is, no more Conſcience to accuſe or condemne for ſinne, it being done away in the blood of Chriſt: and this is the *purged Conſcience*, Heb. 9. 14. which brings Hope, Ioy, Comfort, & confidence with it. 2. *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our reioycing, the teſtimony of our Conſcience.* Then is the Conſcience good, when it is peaceable. As contrarily, then it is evill, painfully evill, when it is turbulent, & troubleſome in the accuſations thereof, and binds ouer to Iudgement, and ſo leaves vs in ſhame feare, perplexity, & griefe, 1 *Iohn.* 3. 20 *If our heart cõdemne vs.* This is a wounded, a troubled conſcience. This is oft the evill Conſcience of evill men. *Iſa.* 57. 21. *There is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God.* Yet may a man have his conſcience vprightly good, which is painefully evill, for a good mans Conſcience

ſcience may bee vnquiet and troubled. Thus then wee ſee what a good Conſcience is, that which is vprightly honeſt, and quietly peaceable. This being ſo, it ſerves to diſcover the dangerous errour of divers ſorts of people, that are in a dreame of having good Conſciences, and yet having nothing leſſe. There be three ſorts of conſciences, which becauſe they are in ſome ſort quiet, and ſting not, their owners would have to goe for good ones, and yet are ſtarke naught, and they are, The *Ignorant*, The *Secure*, and the *Seared* Conſcience.

The *Ignorant* conſcience, Men iudge of their ignorant conſciences, as they doe of their blind, dumbe and ignorant Miniſters: Such neither do nor can Preach, can neither tel men of their ſinnes, nor of their duties. Aske ſuch a blind guides people, what their conceits is of him, & what a kinde of man their Miniſter is, and yee ſhall have him magnified for a paſſing honeſt harmeleſſe man, and a man wondrous

quiet amongſt his neighbours. They may doe what they will for him, he is none of thoſe troubleſome fellowes that will be reproving their faults, or complaining of their diſorders in the Pulpit; oh, ſuch a one is a quiet good man indeed. Thus iudge many of their Conſciences. If their Conſciences be quiet, and lye not grating vpon them, and telling them that their courſes are ſinfull, and damnable, and that their perſons are in a dangerous condition, but rather by their ſilence, ignorance, and vaine pretences doe iuſtifie them, and tell them all will be well enough, Oh then what excellent good Conſciences have theſe men! They make no Conſcience of Familie duties, once in the yeere to come to the Sacrament ſerves the turne; they are common ſwearers in their ordinary communication, make no Conſcience of ſanctifying Sabbaths, &c. and their Conſciences let them alone in all theſe, doe not give them one ſyllable of ill language, oh what gentle, and good natured con-

ſciences

ſciences thinke theſe men they have? But alas, what *evill* conſciences have they? A good conſcience muſt be *upright* as well as *peaceable*. And an upright Conſcience is enlightned with the knowledge of the Word, and by that light iudges what is good, and what evill, and when it findes mens actions not to be good & warrātable, deales plainely, and lets them heare of it. A good Conſcience hath good eies, and is able to diſcerne betweene good and evill. Now theſe mens conſciences are quiet, & have their mouthes ſhut, but whence is it? Becauſe their eyes are ſhut, and they are dumbe, becauſe they are blind. Right Idoll cōſciences, they want mouthes to ſpeake, becauſe they want eyes to ſee. So that it may be ſaid of ſuch conſciences as the Prophet ſpeakes of thoſe Watchmen, *Iſa.* 56. 10 *His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumbe dogs, they cānot barke.* Their blindnes bred dumbneſſe, and their ignorance ſilence. Thus it is with ignorant conſcience. What

is the reason they barke not, but are dumbe, and are thus quiet? Meerely because they are blinde and ignorant.

But yet as good as men account these Consciences now, the time will come that it shall fare with thē as it did with *Adam* and *Eue* after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, *Then their eyes were opened.* So the time will come when these Consciences shall have their eies opēned, & then also shall their mouths be opened, yea wide, & lowd opened, and these now quiet Consciences shall both barke and bite too. Do not therfore flatter thy self in thine ignorance, as if thy condition & conscience were good, because quiet. Never account that true Peace which is not ioyned with vprightnes. Integrity & ignorāce can no more stand together then light and darknesse. Integrity of conscience may be without Peace, Peace can never be without Integritie. Dumbe Ministers goe in the world for good Ministers, because quiet ones, but the day will come that men shall curse them for

for having beene ſo quiet. So ignorant and tongue-tyed conſciences goe for good ones, but the time wil come that men will curſe this peace of their conſcience, for bringing them ſo quietly to hell. The Maſſe goes for an excellēt good ſervice, becauſe *Miſſa non mordet*, honeſt toothleſſe devotion, it never faſtens fang in the hearers fleſh. So many have Maſſe-like conſciences, toothleſſe, and tongueleſſe conſciences, but yet the time will come, that as Maſſe-mongers ſhall curſe their toothleſſe Maſſe, ſo ignorant perſons that now glory in their peace, ſhall curſe their toothleſſe conſcience, yea they ſhall gnaſh their teeth, becauſe Conſcience had no teeth, and ſhall gnaw their tongues for anguiſh of heart, becauſe their conſciences wanted tongues to tell them of the danger of their wicked wayes, that haue brought them to ſo miſerable a condition.

2. The *ſecure* conſcience. As the blind Conſcience was like the dumbe Miniſter, ſo the ſecure conſcience is like

like the flattering Minister, that (*Ier 6. 13.*) heales the hurt of his people with *sweet words, and cryes, peace, peace, where there is no peace.* This conscience wants not an eye, but only a good tongue in the head. It sees its master to doe evill, and knowes it to bee evill, but either cares not to speake, or else is easily put off from speaking, sometime it cares not to speake, being sleepy, heavy, and drowsie, like those Prophets, *Is. 56. 10. They are all dumbe dogges, they cannot barke.* What is the reason? *Sleeping, lying downe, loving to slumber.* A sleepy, and heavy-eyde Curre, though he see one come into his masters yarde, or house, that should not, yet barkes not, as loath by his barking, to disquiet himselfe. A sleepy secure Conscience sees many a sin to enter the soule that should not, and yet lyes still, and sayes nothing, is loath to breake his sleepe. And yet such Consciences men count good.

Sometimes it may be it offers to speake, as a sleepy dog may open once,

or

or twiſe at a ſtrangers entrance, yet is ſoone ſhibd, the leaſt word of the maſter of the houſe makes him whiſt, and quiet. So ſecure Conſciences vpon the greene wound begin to ſmart, and vpon the freſh commiſſion of ſinne begin to mutter, & to have ſome grudgings, but their maſter anſwers them as the friend in his bed did his neighbour deſiring to borrow three loaues, *Luc.* 11. 17. *Trouble me not, for I am in bed.* I pray thee bee quiet, let vs have no wrangling & brawling, it ſhal be ſo no more, I will cry God mercy, I will hereafter finde a time for repentance, &c. & ſo conſcience being ſecure is eaſily put off with a few good words, and ſo cloſing her eyes, and mouth againe, giues her maſter libertie to take his reſt. And thus the ſecure conſcience, becauſe it is ſo eaſily huſht, and ſtilled, is counted a good conſcience, as Nurces count the good children which though they are ready to cry at every turne, yet are eaſily quieted with ſome toy.

But this conſcience is as farre from a good

good Conscience, as Securitie is from Integritie, Sin indeed sleeps, but yet it sleepes but dogsleepe, yea though it sleepe soundly, yet it cannot sleepe long. *Gen. 4.7. Sin lies at the doore.* Sin lies asleepe in the Conscience as a Mastife lies at the doore. A place where a dog cannot sleepe long. The doore is the common passage into & out of the house, every one is passing to and fro that way, and keepe such a clattering with the opening and shutting of the doore, that there can be no sound or at least no long sleepe. No better is the sleepe of secure consciences, which at length like mad band dogs and fell mastifes, will fly in the face of the sinner, ready to pluck out the very throat and heart of him.

The secure Conscience can bee no good Conscience, because it hath neither *uprightnes* nor *peace*, both which were before required to the temper of a good one, *Uprightnes* hath in none, for it is not faithfull in its office, in doth not witnesse, it doth not accuse, as it be-

becomes an honeſt vpright conſcience to doe. *Peace* it hath none. There is a great difference betweene a peace, and a truce; In peace there is a totall depoſition, both of Armes and Enmitie, all hoſtile affections are put off: In a truce, there is but a ſuſpention, & a ceſſation of Armes for a ſeaſon, ſo as during the ſame there is ſtill proviſion of more Force, and a preparation of greater ſtrength. A truce is but a breathing time to fit for fiercer impreſſions. The truce being ended, the aſſaults are rather fiercer thē they were before. The ſecure conſciences are quiet, not becauſe there is peace, for *there is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God. Iſa. 57. 21.* But becauſe there is ſome truce, the world ſmiles vpon them & they have outward hearts eaſe, and this brings them aſleepe, but if any affliction, croſſe, or ſickneſſe come, then they ſee how farre they are from peace. Conſcience is ſometime at truce with ſecure ſinners, but during this truce, conſcience is preparing Armes, and Ammunition

Quomodo tranquilla? cum mundi huius proſperitas alludit, & illudit, cum laudatur peccator in deſideriis animæ ſuæ. Bern. de Conſc.

munition against them, is levying of fresh forces against them, and assoone as the truce is ended, be it sooner or be it later, have at them with more violence, fury, and fiercenesse then ever before. And the truce once ended, it wil easily appear, what a wide breadth of difference there is betweene a secure and a good conscience.

3. A *seared* conscience. That which *Paul* speakes of, 1. *Tim.* 4. 2. *A cauterized Conscience.* That is, as *Beza* translates and expounds it. A Conscience cut off, as it were with a Chirurgions Instrument. An arme, or a leg cut off from the body, stab it, gash it, chop it into gobbets, do what you wil with it, it is insensible, it feeles it not. Or else as our translation hath it, *Having their consciences seared with an hot yron.* A comparison borrowed from Chirurgerie. When a limbe is cut off, Chirurgions vse to seare that part of the Body, from whence the other is taken, with an hot yron, and sometimes they doe cures by searing the affected parts with

with hot yrons. Now theſe parts upon their ſearing have a kinde of cruſty brawnineſſe, which is vtterly inſenſible, which though it be cut, or pricked, it neither bleeds, nor feeles. Thus is it with many mens Conſciences, commit they whatſoever ſinnes they will, yet their hearts are ſo hardened through long cuſtome in ſin, that they feele no gripings, pinches, or bitings at all, but are growne to that dead, and dedolent diſpoſition, *Eph.4.19. Who being paſt feeling, &c.* It is with ſuch mens conſciences, as with labouring mens hands, which through much labour have a brawny hardneſſe growing vpon them which is without any feeling. One may thruſt pins into it, pare it with a knife, and yet without any trouble or griefe at all. Such callous Conſciences have many, that though they be wounded, and gaſhed with never ſuch foule ſins, yet their Conſciences ſhrink not, feele not a whit. Their Conſciences are like Gally-ſlaves backs, ſo bebrawned ouer with often laſhing, that an ordinary

ry laſh will not make them ſo much as once ſhucke in their ſhoulders. You heve many that can ſweare, not only your more civill oathes, of faith and troth, but thoſe ruffianly, and bloody oathes, of blood and wounds, and it never wounds their hearts a whit. You have many that can commit foule ſins, with leſſe touch then others can heare of them. You ſhall have black Smiths that are vſed to the frequent and daily handling of hot yron, hold an hot fire-coale in their hands, and laugh, whilſt another would roare out. There bee thoſe that can be drunk day after day, that conſecrate whole Sabbaths to *Venus* and *Bacchus*, and give themſelves up to foule villanies, and yet not one twitch at the heart, not a ſnib, not a croſſe word from their Conſciences. Eſtrich-like they can concoct yron and put it off as eaſily as another weake ſtomacke can doe gelly. They have brought their hearts to that paſſe the drunkards body is in, *Pro.* 25. 35. *They have ſtriken me, and I was not ſicke; they*

have

have ateen me and I felt it not. Their ſeared Conſciences have no more feeling then our ſotted Drunkards have in their drunkenneſſe, who though they have many a knocke, and ſore bruiſe, yet feele it not. To this fearefull condition, and ſenſleſſe and ſeared ſtupidity of Conſcience many grow, & when they have thus cruſted and brawned the ſame, then they have their Conſciences at a good paſſe, becauſe they heare them not brawling within them. Alas how farre are ſuch from goodnes of Conſcience? In ſome ſenſe, thoſe have worſe Conſciences then the Divill himſelfe, who beleeves and trembles, whoſe Conſcience yet is not ſo ſeared, but it trembles at the thoughts of his deſerved damnation.

And howſoever theſe ſeared conſciences are quiet, yet there will come a day that this ſeared cruſtineſſe ſhall be ſcaled off, and thoſe conſciences which were not ſenſible of ſin, ſhall be moſt ſenſible of pain: though they were paſt feeling in the committing of ſinne, yet

they ſhall be all feeling in ſuffering puniſhment for ſinne. God will pare off that brawnineſſe from their conſciences, & will pare them ſo to the quicke, that they ſhall feele and moſt ſenſibly feele that which here they would not feele. Tremble therefore at the having of ſuch a conſcience, in which there is neither uprightneſſe, nor peace, neither integritie, nor tranquillitie; but a ſenſleſſe & fearfull ſtupiditie. Thus we have ſeene what a good Conſcience is.

Chap. IV.

Peace of Conſcience how gotten.

IT followes now to know how a man may get and keepe a good one, which is the third point which was propounded to bee handled. A point wel worth our inquiring after. A good Conſcience is the moſt precious thing that a Chriſtiā can have: a thing of that eſteeme that where it is wāting, we account a man without a Conſcience. So of

of a man that hath an ill conſcience we uſe to ſay, he is a man of no conſcience. Not that he hath no Conſcience, the Divels themſelves have a Conſcience, and happy it were for them they had none; but when a man hath not a good one, we eſteeme of him as having none at all. There is no greater good we can ſeek after then a good Conſcience. Let us enquire then how we may get, and keepe this ſo great a good.

A good Conſcience then conſiſting in *Peace* and *Integrity*, theſe two being gotten and kept, we ſhall get and keep a good Conſcience.

Firſt then to make the Conſcience peaceably good, theſe things are required.

1. *Faith* in Chriſt, and his blood. The conſcience cannot be at peace till it be purged from its guilt. An impure conſcience cannot but be an unquiet conſcience, and every guilty Conſcience is impure. Guilt is the ſame to the conſcience that the winds are to the ſeas, *Iſa.* 27.20.21. *The wicked are like the tron-*

bled Sea when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt vp mire and dirt, there is no peace to the wicked. Now that which makes the Sea ſo troubleſome and ragingly reſtleſſe, is the violence of the bluſtering winds that trouble and toſſe it to and fro. The windes are not ſo troublſome to the ſea, as guilt is to the conſcience. Therfore as the way to calme the Sea, is to calme the winds; ſo the way to quiet and calme the Conſcience, is to purge and take away the guilt. Guilt is in the Conſcience as *Ionas* in the Ship, out with him, and ſea and ſhip are both quiet. But how then ſhall the guilt bee purged out of the Conſcience? That we find *Heb.* 9. 14. *How much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt purge our cõſciences frõ dead workes?* We cannot have a good conſcience till we be freed from an evill one. The way to be freed from an evill conſcience, is to have *our hearts ſprinkled from an evill conſcience. Heb.* 10. 22. But what is that wherwith the conſcience muſt be ſprinkled to bee made good with peace & quietnes? the ſame which

which we finde 1 *Pet.* 1.2. *The ſprinkling of the blood of Ieſus Chriſt*, and *Heb.* 12. 24 *The blood of ſprinkling which ſpeakes better things then that of Abel.*

So then the Conſcience ſprinkled with Chriſts blood ceaſes to be evill, becomes good and peaceable. The ſame Chriſt that calmed the rage of the Sea by ſtilling the windes, *Mar.* 4. 39. *He aroſe and rebuked the wind, & ſaid vnto the Sea, Peace, and be ſtill, & the wind ceaſed, and there was a great calme*; the ſame Chriſt it is that ſtills the rage of the conſcience, by taking and purging away the guilt thereof, with the ſprinkling on of his blood. His blood *ſpeakes*, *Heb.* 12.24. And ſpeakes not onely to God, but ſpeaks to the conſcience. The voyce which it ſpeakes, is *Peace and bee ſtill*, the ſame voice which to his Diſciples after his reſurection, *Peace bee with you*; & then follows a great calme, and peace makes the conſcience good.

But here the conſcience will inquire how it may come to get this blood ſprinkled vpō it, to make it thus peace-

ably good, and what is it that applies this calming blood of Chriſt? I anſwer therefore, That it is the grace of faith, therefore it was ſaid before, that faith in Chriſts blood maks peace in the cõſcience. Faith is the hand of the ſoule, and as the hyſſope ſprinkle, by which Chriſts blood is ſprinkled upon our cõſciences, *Heb.* 10. 22. *Let us draw neer with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from an euill Conſcience.* And *being iuſtified by faith we have peace towards God. Rom* 5. 1. Hence that coniunction of faith and a good Conſcience, 1. *Tim.* 1. 5. *of a good conſcience, and of faith unfained,* & v. 19. *Holding faith and a good conſcience.* For faith it is that makes a good cõſcience, by making a quiet conſcience. Faith is not onely a purifying grace, *Act.* 15. 9. but it is alſo a pacifying grace, *Rom.* 5. 1. It not only purges our corruptiõ, by applying the efficacy of Chriſts blood, but ſpecially purges our guilt by applying the merit of his blood. So that no faith, no peace, & no peace, no good con-

conſcience. A defiled Conſcience can be no good conſcience, and what defiles the conſcience? See *Tit.* 1.15. *Vnto them that are defiled and unbeleeving, nothing is pure, but even their minde and conſcience is defiled.* They that be defiled have their conſciences defiled, but how come they and their Conſciences ſo? *To them that are defiled and unbeleeving.* Therefore an unbeleeving Conſcience is a defiled conſcience, & a defiled conſcience is no good cõſcience, becauſe it can have no peace ſo long as it is clogged with defiling guilt. But contrarily, faith purifying not onely from corruption, but from guilt, by the applicatiõ of Chriſts blood makes the Conſcience pure and peaceable both.

There can be no *peace* of conſcience but where there is the *righteouſneſſe* of the perſon. There is no peace to the wicked. *Iſa.* 57.21. as if he ſhould ſay, an evill unrighteous perſon cãnot have a good conſcience: where the perſon is evill, there the cõnſcience cannot bee good. Now faith in Chriſts blood

makes a mans perſon good, and ſo the cõſcience becomes good. It makes the perſon *righteous*, and the perſon being *righteous*, the conſcience is at *peace*, for *the worke* of righteouſnes, is peace, *and the effect* of righteouſnes, quietnes, *and aſſurance for ever*, *Iſa.* 32.17. with which that of the Apoſtle ſweetly ſutes, *Reu.* 7.2. *Firſt King of* righteouſnes, *and after that King of* peace. Our perſons muſt firſt find Chriſt a King of *righteouſneſſe*, by iuſtifying them from their guilt, before our conſciences can finde him King of *Salem*, pacifying them from their vnquietnes. Our perſons once *iuſtifyed* by Chriſts blood frõ their guilt, and vnrighteouſnes, our conſciences are *pacified* and freed from their vnquietneſſe.

Wouldſt thou then have a good conſcience? Get the peace of Conſcience. Wouldſt thou have Peace in thy conſcience? Get faith in thy ſoule; Beleeve in the Lord Ieſus, and get thy ſoule ſprinkled with his blood, and then *Heb.* 10.2. Thou ſhalt have no more con-

conſcience of ſin, thy conſcience ſhall be at quiet, no more accuſing thee, nor threatning thee condemnation for thy ſinne.

2. *Repentance* from dead workes. Though Chriſts blood bee that which purges the conſcience frō dead works, and ſo workes peace; yet that peace is not wrought in our apprehenſion; neither do we get the feeling of this faith without ſome further thing. Therefore to our faith muſt be joyned our repentance, though not in the making of our peace, yet for the feeling of it. Many are ready to catch at Chriſts blood, & if that will make a good conſcience they are then ſafe enough. But as thou muſt have Chriſts blood, ſo Chriſt wil have thine heart alſo bleed by repentance, ere he will vouchſafe the ſenſe of peace. A conſcience therefore that would be a conſcience having peace, muſt not onely be a *beleeving* but a *repenting* conſcience, *Mat.* 3. 2. *Repent ye, for the Kingdome of heauen is at hand*, the kingdome of heaven ſhall be yours if you

you will repent, ye ſhall have it immediately upon your repentance. But wherein ſtands this kingdome offered to repentant cõſciences? *The kingdome of God ſtands in peace, and ioy in the holy Ghoſt, Rom.* 14 17. *Repent, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the holy Ghoſt. Act.* 3.38. And what may that gift be. *The fruits of the Spirit are love, ioy, peace, Gal.* 5.22. Wich though it be to bee underſtood of peace between man & man, yet alſo that peace which is betweene God and man is the fruit of the Spirit, & *the love of God ſhed abroad into our hearts by the holy Ghoſt. Ro.* 5.5. is the gift of the holy Ghoſt, which he gives to all, that by repentance ſeeke to get a good conſcience. *Bleſſed are they that mourne*, that is, which repent, *for they ſhall be comforted, Mat.* 5 .they ſhall have the peace of a good Conſcience, which is the greateſt & ſweeteſt comfort in the world.

Many doe truſt all to their ſuppoſed faith, as a ſhort cut and a compendious way to a good cõſcience, but he whoſe faith doth not as well purifie the heart

as

as pacifie it, hath neither faith nor a good conſcience. It is idle to hope for peace by faith, whilſt thou liveſt impenitently in a ſinfull courſe. Thou canſt have no peace of conſcience ſo long as thou haſt peace with thy ſinnes. Peace with Conſcience will be had by warre with ſin, in the dayly practice of repentance. It is but a dreame to thinke of a good Conſcience in peace, whileſt a man makes no Conſcience of ſin. They that have a good cõſcience by Chriſts blood, may bee indeed ſaid to have no Conſcience of ſinne, as *Heb.* 10.2. But yet there is a great difference between *having* no Conſcience, and *making no* Conſcience of ſinne. To *have* no conſcience of ſinne, is to have a peaceable good conſcience, not accuſing of ſin, being ſprinkled with Chriſts blood. To *make* no Conſcience of ſin, is for a man impenitently to live, & lye in any ſin. Now let any judge whether theſe two can ſtand together, that a mã may live as he liſt, and *make no Conſcience* of any ſinne, and yet have ſuch peace by faith

faith as that he *hath no conscience* of sin. It is an unconscionable thing in this sense to lay all upon Christ, an unconscionable request to have him take away our guiltnesse, and yet we would wallow in our filthinesse still. How shal faith remove the sting, when repentance removes not the sinne?

Men seeking peace by faith in Christs blood, and yet living and lying in their sinnes without repentance, God will give them *Iehues* answere to *Iehoram*, 2. *King.* 9. 22. *What peace, so long as the whoredomes of thy mother Iezebel, & her witchcrafts are so many?* So what peace of Conscience, so long as thine oathes, Sabbath-breaches, whoredomes, drunkennes, &c. do remaine, & remaine, vnrepented of, and vnreformed. It is true of all sinne, which is spoken of Romish Idolatry, *Apoc.* 14. 11. *They have no rest day nor night*; that is, no peace of Conscience to any of that religion, so of all that live in any sinne, they have no true rest day or night; that is, *as Isaiah* interprets it, There is no peace to the wicked

ked. Peace and wickedneſs live not together under one roof. Wouldſt thou then have a peaceable heart? Get an humbled, a mourning and a repentant heart for ſin. The leſſe peace with ſin, the more peace with GOD and our owne Conſciences.

3. The conſtant and conſcionable exerciſe of praier. An excellent means to helpe vs to the ſenſe of that peace which makes the conſcience good. He that hath a good Conſcience wil make Conſcience of prayer. And praier will helpe to make a good Conſcience better. *Phil.* 4. 7. *In every thing by prayer and ſupplication with thankſgiving, let your requeſts be made known vnto God,* & marke what ſhall be the fruit thereof, *And the peace of God that paſſes all vnderſtanding, ſhall keepe your hearts and mindes through Ieſus Chriſt.* See *Iob.* 33. 26. *He ſhall pray vnto God, and he will bee favourable vnto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with ioy.* It is many times with mens conſciences, as it was with *Saul*, he was vexed and diſquieted with an evill ſpirit; but

Davids

Davids Harpe gave him eaſe: Praier is a *Davids* Harpe, the muſicke whereof ſweetly calmes, & compoſes a diſtempered and diſquieted Conſcience, and puts it into frame againe. As in other diſquiets of the heart, after praier *David* bids his ſoule *returne unto her reſt. Pſal.* 116.4.7, So may we in theſe diſquiets of Conſcience doe no leſſe.

The way to get a good peaceable Conſcience, is to have acquaintance with God; and when we have acquaintance with him, then ſhall wee have peace, *Iob.* 22.21. *Acquaint thy ſelfe now with him, and be at peace*. Now acquaintance is gotten with God by prayer. *Zech.* 12.9. *They ſhall call on my name, and I will heare them; I will ſay, it is my people; and they ſhall ſay, the Lord is my God.* Loe how in prayer acquaintance is bred betweene God and his people, and aequaintance breeds love, and peace; and peace a good Conſcience. Indge then what pitious Conſcience they muſt needs have, that make ſo little Conſcience of ſeeking God in this duty;

duty; of wicked ones the *Pſalm* ſpeaks, *They call not upon God*, *Pſal.* 14. as much as *Iſaiah* ſayes, There is no peace to the wicked, they are utterly voyd of good Conſcience.

Chap. V.

Integritie of Conſcience how procured.

And thus wee have ſeene how the Conſcience may bee good for peace. It followes to conſider how it may become vprightly good, with the goodnes of Integritie. The goodneſſe of Integritie is gotten and kept by doing fiue things.

1. Walke and live as *Paul* in this text, *Before God.* Set thy ſelfe ever in all thy wayes, as in the ſight and preſence of God, who is the Iudge & Lord of conſcience. Of *Moſes* it is ſaid, that he ſaw him *that was inviſible*. *Heb.* 11. 27. Therfore it is that men walk with ſuch looſe and evill Conſciences, becauſe they thinke they walke inviſibly. And they thinke

thinke that God ſees not them, becauſe they ſee not God. An upright Conſcience is a good conſcience, and this is the way to get an upright one, *Gen.* 17 1. *Walke before me, and be upright*. To have God alwaies in our eye, wil make vs walke with vpright hearts. So *Pſal.* 119.168. *I have kept thy precepts, & thy teſtimonies*, that is in effect, I have kept a good conſcience; but how came hee to doe it? *for all my waies are before thee*. Cõſciẽce, as we ſaw before, is a knowledge together, that is, together with God. Now then this is an excellent meanes to get and keepe a good conſcience, to be carefull to doe nothing, but that which we would bee content God ſhould know as wel as our ſelves. Thinke with thy ſelfe before every evill action: *b* Am I content that God ſhould know of this? But how then may a man bring himſelfe to this? Set thy ſelfe alwayes in Gods preſence, & ſee the inviſible God, and ſee thy ſelfe viſible in his eye, and know that thou doeſt nothing which he takes not notice

tice of. This well thought upon, and laid to heart, would make men make much conſcience of their wayes. The contrary to this is *raſh walking*, Lev. 26 when a man walkes ſo looſely, & heedleſly, as if there were no eye upon him to view him in his actions.

2. Frame thy whole Courſe by the rule, and ſhape it by the direction of the word of God. Gods word is the Rule of Conſcience. *Gal. 6. 16. As many as walke according to this Rule*, Men muſt then walke by Rule, & the Word muſt be this Rule. *Pſal* 30. 23. *To him that orders his converſation*; all Chriſtians muſt be regulars, & muſt live orderly. But what is that rule by which their Converſation muſt be ordered? That ſame *Pſ.* 119. 133. *Order my ſteps in thy Word.* Hee that orders his courſe by that rule, which is the rule of conſcience, ſhall be ſure to keepe and get a good cõſciẽce. He that wil make good work will work by his rule, wheras he that works by gueſſe muſt needs make but ill worke. *Whatſoever is not of faith is ſin.*

Dirige greſſus ſecundũ verbum tuum. Quid eſt, Dirige ſecundum verbum tuum. Vtrecti ſint greſſus mei, quia rectum eſt verbum tuum. Ego, inquit, diſtortus ſum ſub pondere iniquitatis, ſed verbum tuum eſt regula veritatis, me ergo diſtortum à me corrige tanquam ad regulam, hoc eſt, ad verbum tuum. Aug. de verb. Apoſt. ſer. 12.

Rom. 14. 23. That is, whatsoever a man doth, and hath not warrant for it out of, and from the rule of the Word, makes a mans conscience in that particular to be evil. And therefore, *v.* 5. *Let a man be fully perswaded in his own mind.* How happy should men be in getting and keeping good consciences, if they would lay their lives and actions to the Rule. The want of this is it that makes men, men of so ill consciences. Some live by no Rule, some by false Rules; & hence come mens consciences to bee so Anomalous. Some live by no Rule, but doe whatsoever seemes good in their owne eyes, goe as their lusts lead them, and follow his beck that rules in the Ayre. This is also to *walke rashly.* Leu. 26. He that doth things without rule, goes rashly to worke. Hee that walkes irregularly, walks rashly, & no marvell if men have crooked wayes, & crooked consciences, when they will not live by Rule. Some againe live by false rules, and that not onely Popish fictitious Regulars that live by superstitious

stitious Rules of their *Dominick, Francis, &c.* But amongst our selves many have a Rule they doe live by, but that rule is not the Word, but some false Rules of their owne deviſing. Such as are these; Great mens practise, or some learned mans opinion, the custome of times and places wherein they live, the example of the multitude, or some secret, blinde, and selfe-conceived principles which they keepe to themselves, and by which they live. All which being crooked Rules, must needes make crooked consciences, whereas if men would live by *Davids* Rule, *Psal.* 119. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*, and in every action would have an eye and *a respect unto the Commandements*, as he had, *Psal.* 119. 6. then should they *make straight paths for their feet*, *Heb.* 12. 13. and keep upright consciences in every spirituall action; therefore haue an eye to the Word, question it whether it be justifiable & warrantable by the Word or no, and meddle no further then that wil autho-

Inter causas malorũ nostrorum est quod vivimus ad exempla, nec ratione componimur, sed cõsuetudine. Quod si pauci facerent nollemus imitari, cum plures facere cœperunt, quasi honestius sit, quia frequentius sequimur: & recti apud nos locũ tenet error, vbi publicus factus est, Sen. Ep. 124.

rize, and beare thee out. If this courſe were taken, ſuch a good courſe would make and keepe a good Conſcience. And why ſhould not men be willing to take this courſe; why will we not make that Word our Rule, which muſt bee made our Iudge? *The word which I ſpeak ſhall iudge you in the laſt day.* Iohn 12. 48. The Word ſhall judge our conſciences, therefore let it rule, and order them. And if it have the ruling of our conſciences, it will make them good conſciences, and when they are good they neede not feare what Iudge they come before, nor what judgement they undergoe. In ſumme, if we would have good conſciences, we muſt make more conſcience then is commonly made of reading, and ſearching the Scriptures. The ignorance and neglect of this duty is it which banes ſo many cõſciẽces in the world.

3. Keep a daily and a frequent Audit with thy conſcience, often examinatiõ of the conſcience conduces much to the goodnes of it. The Prophet complaines

plaines of his people, *Every one turned to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battel. Ier.* 8. 6. Here were men far from a good Conſcience; but what was the reaſon of it? He gives it in the former words, *No man repenteth him of his wickednes, ſaying, what have I done?* There was no examination of their Conſciences and Courſes, what they were, nor how they were, and from hence comes this miſchiefe. This was *Davids* courſe. *Pſ.* 119. 51. *I conſidered my waies and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies.* When a mans feet are in the wayes of Gods teſtimonies, then he walkes with an upright Conſcience, and marke how *David* came to doe ſo, *I conſidered my wayes*, he uſed to examine his Conſcience.

The firſt ſtep to get a good conſcience, is for a man to know that his conſcience before reformatiō is evil. How ſhal that be knowne without a ſearch? When a ſearch hath diſcovered what it is that makes the cōſcience, & courſe euill, then will Conſcience be ready to

Integritatis tuæ curioſus explorator vitam tuam in quotidiana diſcuſſione examina. Attende diligenter quantum proficias, vel quantū deficias, qualis ſis in moribus, qualis ſis in affectibus, quam ſimilis ſis Deo, vel quā diſſimilis, qua prope, vel quam longe &c. Redde ergo te tibi, & ſi non ſemper vel ſæpe, at ſatē interdum Bern. med. de vot. c. 5

labor a man to the reformation of that which is amiſſe, and will not ceaſe to urge, and ply a man till it be done. Frequent examination as it helpes to the making of Scholars, ſo to the making of Conſciences good: Hence mens lying in ſo groſſe neglects of good duties, in ſo many great evills, becauſe men and their Conſciences never reckon. Men take not themſelves aſide into their cloſets and chambers, & there ſet not up a privy ſeſſions to make inquirie into their owne hearts & waies, and therefore are their wayes & Conſciences ſo much out of order. Many a man thinkes his eſtate in the world to be very good, and thinkes hee growes rich and wealthy, when his eſtate indeede is weake, and growes every day worſe then other. Now what is it that cauſes ſo great a miſtake? Nothing but this, that he never looks over his books nor caſts over his reckonings. If he had done this, he ſhould have ſeen that his eſtate was not anſwerable to his conceit, and the knowledge of his miſconceit

ceit would have made him have lived at a more wary, and thrifty rate, and have kept himselfe within such a compasse as might have kept up his estate, whereas now the not examining his bookes, puts him into a conceit of wealth, and this conceit beggers and undoes him. It fares no better with too many in their Consciences. *Laodicea* thought well of herselfe, *Thou sayest, I am rich*. If she had examined her conscience, shee should have seene that which Christ saw, that she was poore, blind, naked, and miserable, and the sight of this would have made her to have sought after that counsell which Christ there gives her. *Revel. 3.* Men would have farre better consciences if they knew in what ill case their consciences stand, and examination would helpe them to the knowledge of this. If men would but over-look the book of their conscience, and see how many omissions of good, how many sinfull commissions stand registred there, it would both make them marvellous

ſollicitous how to get thē wiped out, and wondrous warie how any more ſuch Items came there. Often reckonings would blot out, and keep off the ſcore. Here is then wiſdome for ſuch as deſire to keepe good Conſcieneces. Doe with the workes of thy converſation as God did with the works of his Creation. He not onely ſurveied at the ſixt dayes end the whole worke of the weeke, but at each daies end made a particular ſurveigh thereof. Do thou ſo, not onely at the weekes end, at thy lives end, ſearch thine heart, and examine thy courſe, but at every daies end looke backe into the day paſt, and examine what thy cariage and behaviour hath beene. This being done, a man ſhal find his works either good or evil. If good, how ſhall his conſcience cheer him with its peace? If evill, then if conſcience have any life, or breath in it, it will make a man fall to humiliation, & to a godly reſolution of watching over his wayes for the future, ſo ſhall Conſcience be much holpen for integrity.

Omni die cum vadis cubitum, examina diligenter quid cogitaſti, & quid dixiſti in die & quomodo vtile tempus & ſpatium quod datum eſt ad acquirendum vitam æternā diſpenſaſti, Et ſi bene tranſiviſti, lauda De-

Davids

Davids counſell is good, *Pſ.*4.5. *Examine your hearts upon your beds*; and his reſolution is alſo good, verſ.8. of the ſame Pſalme, *I will lay me down and ſleep in peace.* Who would not be glad ſo to ſleepe, & to take his reſt ſo? would we ſleepe upon *Davids* pillow, ſleepe in peace? then hearken wee to *Davids* counſell, to *examine* our ſelves *upon our beds*. There is nothing makes a mans bed ſo ſoft, nor his ſleepe ſo ſweet as a good cõſcience. It is with Sins as with Cares, both trouble a mans ſleep, both are troubleſome bed-fellowes, as they therfore ſleep ſweetly that leave their cares in their ſhoos, ſo they ſleep with moſt peace that let not ſinne lye downe to ſleepe with them, who are ſo farre from lying downe in their ſinnes, that by their good will, will not let the Sun goe downe upon their ſin, but by examination ferret out the ſame. This being done, it may be ſaid as *Prou.*3.24. *Thou ſhalt lye downe, and thy ſleepe ſhall be ſweete.* Nay further, examine thy conſcience upon thy bed, and thou ſhalt not

num; ſi male vell negligenter, iudicas, & ſequenti die non differas confiteri. Si aliquid cogitaſti, dixiſti, vel feciſti quod tuam conſcientiam multum remordeat, non comedas antequam confitearis Ber. form. vit. honeſt. *Suauius dormiunt qui reliquunt curas in calceis.*

not onely sleep in peace, but thou shalt awake & arise the next morning with an upright frame of heart, disposed to the more caution against sin the day following. So much *David* seemes to intimate in that forenamed place. *Tremble and sinne not.* That is, be afraid to sin, take heed ye sinne no more. But what course may one take to come to that integrity of conscience, and feare to sin? Take this course, *Examine your hearts upon your beds.*

But alas how rare a practise is this, & therefore are good consciences so rare. Many thinke this an heavy burden, and a sore taske, and count the remedy a great deale worse then the disease; there is nothing they tremble at more then a domesticall Audit, and this reckoning with their cõsciences. They say of conscience as *Ahab* of *Micaiah*, and care as little to meddle with cõscience as *Ahab* with *Micaiah*. *I hate him, for hee never speaks good to me.* 1. King. 22. So they thinke the conscience will deale with them. They know their conscience

ence will speak as *Iob* sayes God wrote, *Thou writest bitter things against me.* Conscience hath such a stinging waspish tongue, that by no means they dare endure a parley with it. It is with many and their consciences, as with men that have shrewish wives. Many a man when he is abroad, hath no joy at all to come home, nay hee is very loath to come within his owne doores, he fears hee shall have such a peale rung him, that he had rather be on the house top, as *Salomon* speakes, or in some out house, and lodg as our Saviour at *Bethlem* in a crach, or a Manger, then come within the noyse of her clamorous, and chattering tongue. So many think conscience hath such a terrible shrewish tongue, that if they shall but come within the sound thereof, they shall be cast into such melancholly dumpes, as they shall not be able in hast to clawe off againe. How much, and how seriously are they to be pitied that to prevent a few houres, or dayes supposed sorrow, and sadnesse, by which they might

might come to procure both peace & integrity of Conſcience, will adventure the rack & eternall torture of cõſcience in Hell. Remember that there is no melancholly to the melancholly of Hell.

Chap. VI.

Two further meanes to procure integrity of Conſcience.

IN the fourth place, deale with thy Conſcience as God would have *Abraham* doe by *Sarah*, *Gen.* 21. 12. *In all that Sarah ſhall ſay vnto thee hearken vnto her voice.* So here, If we would get & keepe a good Conſcience, in all that it ſhal ſay unto us, being enlightned and directed by the word, hearken unto it. Conſcience being enlightened hath a voyce, and no man but ſometime or other ſhal heare this voice of conſciẽce. Conſcience is Gods Monitor to ſpeak to men when others cãnot, or dare not ſpeake. Sometimes men cannot ſpeake

as

as not being privy to other mens neceſſities & failings. Sometimes they may not be ſuffered to ſpeake, as *Ahab* will not endure *Micaiah* to ſpeake to him. Sometime if a man ſpeak, he may have rough and angry anſwers, as the Prophet had from *Amaziah*. 2. *Chro*. 26. 16 *Art thou made of the Kings Counſell? forbeare, why ſhouldeſt thou be ſmitten?* God hath therefore provided every man even great men which may not bee ſpoken to, he hath provided them a boſom Chaplein, that will round them in the eare, and will talke roundly to them, one that will be of their counſel in deſpight of them; one that feares no fiſts, dreads no ſmiting, yea, one that feares not to ſmite the greateſt, 2. *Sam*. 24. 10. *And Davids heart ſmote him after that he had numbred the people.* It may bee many there were about *David* that had not the hearts to ſmite *David* with a grave reproofe, though he gives leave to the righteous to do ſo. *Pſal*. 141. *Let the righteous ſmite me*, but yet whileſt others, it may be, are feareſull and timorous

morous to doe him that good office, conſcience is at no demurre upon the poynt, that feares not, but ſmites *David* for ſinne.

Gods Miniſters are oft ſlighted, and light ſet by, Preachers cannot be regarded, but God hath given men a Preacher in their own boſome, & this Preacher wil make many a curraine ſermon, will take men to taske upon their pillow, and will be preaching ouer our Sermons againe to them. And though many will not be brought to repetition of Sermons in their Families, yet they have a Repeater in their boſome, that will be at private repetitions with them in ſpite of them, & wil tell them, This is not according to that you have bin taught, you have bin taught otherwiſe; you have bin reproved for, and convinced of this ſinne in the publike Miniſterie, &c. Why doe not you hearken and reforme? Thus then conſcience having a voice, and doing the office of a Preacher unto us, if wee would have conſcience good, then in all things that con-

Conscience enlightened shall say unto us, hearken unto it. More distinctly Conscience hath a two-fold voyce.

1. A voyce of direction, telling us what is good or evill, what is lawful & unlawfull, *Isa.* 30, 21. *And thine eares shall heare a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walke ye in it.* That is understood of the voyce of Gods spirit in the secret suggestions therof, & such is the voice also of conscience within vs, dictating to us, and directing us what duties are to be done, what courses to be avoyded. How many times doth conscience presse us to repentance and to reforme our wayes? how often doth it call upon us to settle to such & such good courses? and so with *David*, *Psal.* 16.7. *Our reines doe teach it in the night season.*

Ita enim desuper in silentio sonat quidam non auribus sed mentibus. Augustin. in Psal. 42.

2. A voyce of correction and accusation, checking and chiding, taking up & snipping us when we doe amisse. So *Psal.* 42.5.11. and *Ps.* 43.5. *Why art thou cast downe O my Soule, and why art thou disquieted within me?* And *Ps.* 77.

10.

10. whilſt in the foregoing verſes hee was complaining, and vſing ſome ſpeeches that might ſavour of ſome diffidence, ſee how conſcience doth her office by a correcting voyce; *And I ſaid, This is my infirmitie*; as if he had ſaid, whilſt I was uſing ſuch diffident expoſtulations, mine owne conſcience told me, I did not doe well. Conſcience ſo ſpeakes to us, as the Lord to *Ionah*, *Ion* 4.4,9. *Doeſt thou well to bee angry?* So ſaies conſcience oft, Doeſt thou wel to be thus earthly, thus eager vpon the world, thus negligent and formall in holy duties? thus conſcience gives her privy nips, and her ſeeret checks. This is that of which *Iob* ſpeakes, *Iob.* 27. 6. *My heart ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live.* Implying that conſcience after ſin hath a reproaching voice, as when it befooles a man, as Foole that thou art to doe this, to loſe thy peace with God for a baſe ſinfull pleaſure. Thus *Davids* conſcience reproached him, 2. *Sam.* 24. 10. *I have done very fooliſhly*; yea, *Pſ.* 37. 22. it puts the foole and the beaſt both

upon

upon him, *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, I was as a beaſt before thee.* This is the ſmiting of the conſcience. 2 *Sam.* 24. 10 Conſcience firſt points with the finger and gives direction, if that be neglected, it ſmites with the fiſt, & gives correction.

Now then that which I ayme at, is this; If we would get and keepe a good conſcience, then neglect not, nor deſpiſe Conſcience when it ſpeaketh. Doth thy Conſcience preſſe thee to any workes of piety, to the care of family-worſhip, and private devotion, to the reading of the Scriptures, ſanctification of the Sabbath, &c. In any caſe be ſo wiſe as to hearken to the counſels to the urgings, and to the injunctions which come out of the Court of Conſcience. Hearken in any caſe to this Preacher, whom thou canſt not ſuſpect of partiality, malice, ill will, as thou doſt others, thereby giving way to ſatans policie, that hereby ſtops up the paſſages of thine heart, that the Word may not enter. Here can bee no ſuch

ſuſpitious; Conſcience cannot be ſuſpected to be ſet on by others; though *Ieremy* be charged to be ſet on by *Baruch*, *Ier.*43.3. Therefore hearken to the voice of this Preacher, and this will helpe thee to a good Conſcience.

Againe, doth thy conſcience rebuke thee, doth it chide and check thee, doth thy heart *reproach thee for thy wayes?* Doth it ſay, doeſt thou well to live in ſuch and ſuch ſinnes? Doth it pũctually reprove thee for thine evils? Doe not anſwere Conſcience, as *Ionas* anſwered God, frowardly, *Yea I doe well*, but even cloſe with Conſcience, & doe thou accuſe thy ſelfe as faſt as it accuſes, acknowledge thy folly, yeeld, promiſe, and covenant with thy conſcience a preſent and ſpeedy reformation. This if it were done, how happy ſhould men be in getting and keeping a good Conſcience,

Ideo quantum potes, teipſum coargue, inquire in te accuſato is primũ partibus fungere, deinde Iudicis noviſsime deprecatoris: aliquando offunde te. Senec. epiſt. 28.

But alas, how few regard the voyce of Conſcience, and once hearken to it, and the very want of this duty is it which breeds ſo much ill conſcience in the

the world. Men in this caſe are guilty of a double wickedneſſe. Either they deale as the Iewes with the Apoſtles, *Act.*4.18.& 1 *Theſ.*2.16. They either *ſtop conſciences mouth*, and labour to ſilence this Preacher, or elſe they deale with Conſcience as the Iewes did with *Stephen*, *Act.*7.57. *They ſtopped their ears.* If they cannot ſtop Conſciences mouth, they will at leaſt ſtoppe their owne eares.

1 They labour to ſtoppe Conſciences mouth. If Conſcience beginne to take them aſide, and to ſay to them, as *Ehud* to *Eglon*; *Iudg.*3.19. *I have a ſecret errand unto thee*: they anſwer, but in annother ſenſe, as hee did; *Keepe ſilence.* If Conſcience offer to be talking to them, they ſhuffle it off as *Felix* did *Paul*, they are not at leaſure, they will finde ſome other time when their leaſure will better ſerue. Yea many when their conſciences reproache them, they againe reproach and reprove it, and anſwere it as the *Danites* did *Micah*, *Iudges* 11. 23.

What ayleth thee? and are ready to give reproachfull language to their owne conſcience, that it cannot be quiet and let them alone.

2. But yet conſcience wil not oftentimes be thus poſted and ſhuffled off, wil not be gagged, or ſuffer her lips to be ſown up, but wil deal with a man as the woman of Canaan did with our Saviour, *Math.* 15. She would not be put off with neglect, or croſſe anſwers, but ſhe ſtill preſſes upon our Saviour, and grows ſo much the more importunate. So oftttimes conſcience when ſhe ſees men ſhuffle, growes the more importunate, and wil dog and haunt men ſo much the more. Yea, it deals like the blind men, *Math.* 20. 31. who when the multitude rebuked them, *they cryed the more.* Now then when Conſcience growes thus clamorous, and will not bee ſilenced, then they will ſtop their owne eares, that if it will needs be prating, it ſhall but tell a tale to a deafe man. To this end men put a double tricke upon their Conſciences.

1. *Sauls*

1. *Sauls tricke.* *Saul* is vexed with an evill ſpirit, what muſt bee the cure? ſeeke him out a minſtrell. Thus many, when the cry of conſcience is up, betake them to their merriments & iollities. They try whether the noiſe of the Harps, and Viols, and the roarings of good fellowes will not drowne the voice and noiſe of Conſcience. They will trie whether the dinne of an Alehouſe, or the ratling and clattering of the Dice and Tables cannot deafe their eares againſt the clamours of Conſcience. Thus do many in the accuſations of Conſcience, give themſelves wholly up to all manner of pleaſures and delights, that ſo their minds being taken vp with them, there might bee no leaſure to give conſcience any the leaſt audience.

2. *Cains tricke.* *Cain* had a marke of God upon him, *Gen.* 4.15. And what might that marke be? *Chryſoſtom* thinks it was a continuall ſhaking and trembling of his body. If that were his marke, why might not that trembling

Chryſin 1. *ep. Cor. Hom* 7.

come from the horrour of his guilty conſcience, following him with a continuall hue and cry for murther, & reproching him for a bloody murtherer. How-ever, no queſtion but his conſcience continually haunted him, and the cry of blood was ever in his ears. Now then what courſe takes he? ye ſhall ſee *Gen.*4.17. that hee falls a building of Cities, betakes himſelf to a multitude of imployments, that the noiſe of the ſawes, axes, and mallets, might be lowder then the noiſe of his Conſcience. If Conſcience bee out of quiet with them, and will not ceaſe to urge and pinch them, then have among their ſheep, & oxen, that their bleating, and bellowing may keepe under the voice of conſcience, they do ſo poſſeſſe their heads and their thoughts, and ſo overload them with much dealings in the world, that there is no ſpare time wherein their eare can be free to heare the voice of conſcience. The clutter of their many buſineſſes make too great a noyſe for Conſcience to have audi-

ence.

ence. They deal with their conſciences as the *Epheſians* dealt with *Alexander*, *Act.*19.33.34. *And Alexander beckned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew that he was a Iew, all with one voice about the ſpace of two houres cryed out, Great is Diana of the Epheſians.* If *Alexander* had had never ſo good lungs, & ſtrong ſides, hee might have ſtrained his voice till he had crazed the organs of language, & might have ſpoken till he had beene hoarſe againe, before he could have beene heard to have ſpoken one ſyllable, though he had ſpoken all the reaſon in the world. Such a noiſe of an outragious bellowing multitude had bin almoſt enough to have drowned the voice of a Canon. Thus deale men with their Conſcience, if ſhe but prepare to ſpeake and give but a becke with the hand, preſently thruſt themſelues into a crowd of buſineſſe that may out-cry and over-cry the bawling noiſe thereof. It was an hideous noiſe that the ſhriking infants of Iſrael made

when they were offered up alive in fire unto *Moloch*. Now leſt their parents bowels ſhould earne with compaſſion, & be affected with the ſhrikes of their poore babes, therefore they had their Drummes and Trumpets ſtrucke up and ſounded in the time of ſacrifice, to make ſuch a noiſe, that in no caſe the lamentable cries of the infants ſhould be heard. The ſame trick doe too many put upon their conſciences, if they will be clamoring, they will have ſome Drum or other, whoſe greater noiſe may deafe their eares from hearing the cries of Conſcience.

But alas what poore projects are theſe? The time will come when men ſhal have neither pleaſures nor profits, neither delights nor buſineſſe, to ſtop their eares. Though now men beat upon theſe Drumme-heads, and with the noiſe of their pleaſures & profits, keep Conſcience voyce under from being heard: Yet the day will come, when God will beat out theſe Drum-heads, and thē the cries, & horrid & hideous

ſhreikes

ſhreikes of Conſcience ſhalbe heard: God will one day ſtrip thee of all thy pleaſures and imployments, and will turne thee ſingle and looſe to thy conſcience, and it ſhall have full liberty to bait thee, and bite thee at pleaſure. Oh how much better is it to be willing to hearken to the voice of Conſcience here, then to bee forced to heare it in hell, when the time of hearkning will be paſt and gone. Hearken to it now, and thou ſhalt not heare it hereafter. Hearken to the admonitions and reproofes of it now, and thus ſhalt thou get Integrity here, and ſhalt bee free from hearing the doleſull clamours of it in hell hereafter.

5. To get and keep a good Conſcience ever in caſes of a doubtfull and queſtionable nature, be ſure to take the ſureſt ſide. Many things are of a queſtionable nature, and much may be ſaid on either ſide; in ſuch caſes, if thou wouldſt have a good Conſcience, take the ſureſt ſide, that ſide on which thou mayſt be ſure thou ſhalt not ſinne. As for

for example. There be diverſe games and recreations whoſe lawfulneſſe are queſtioned, yet much may be ſaid for them, and poſſibly they may have the judgement of diverſe reverend & learned men for their lawfulneſſe. Now what ſhall a man doe in this caſe? Take the ſure ſide. If I uſe them it is poſſible I may ſinne, it may be they are not ſinful, yet I am not ſo ſure of it that I ſhal not ſin if I uſe them, as I am ſure I ſhall not ſinne if I doe not uſe them. I am ſure that not to uſe ſuch ſports breakes none of Gods commandements, a man may be bold to build upon that. Hee that lives by this rule, ſhall keepe his Conſcience from many a flaw. Hee that ſayles amongſt rockes it is poſſible he may eſcape ſplitting, but he is not ſo ſure to keepe his veſſel ſafe & whole as he that ſayles in a cleare ſea where no rocks are at all. It is good in matter of life and practiſe, to doe as *Auguſtine* ſpeakes in caſe of doctrine. *We live more ſafely, ſaith he, if we attribute all wholly to God, and do not commit our ſelves partly*

Tutiores igitur vivimus ſi totum Deo damus, Non autem nos illi ex parte, & nobis ex parte committimus. Aug. de dono perſeu. cap. 6.

ly to God, and partly to our ſelves. In doctrines it is good to hold the *ſafeſt* ſide wherein there can be no danger, yea, *Bellarmine* himſelfe after his long diſpute for juſtification by merit, comes to this at laſt, *That by reaſon of the uncertainty of our owne righteouſneſſe, and the danger of vaine-glory, it is the moſt ſafe way to repoſe our whole confidence in the mercy and goodneſſe of God alone.* Wch way ſoever *Bellarmine* is gone himſelf, or any of his religiō, I thinke common reaſon will teach a man ſo much wiſedome to goe the *ſafeſt* way to heaven, and that the *ſafeſt* way is the beſt way. The Lord that would have us make our *calling and election ſure*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. would not have us put ſo great a matter as the ſalvation of our ſoules upon *Bellarmines* hazard, & confeſſed *vncertaintie* of our owne righteouſnes. Now as in caſe of doctrine, ſo in caſe of practiſe it is great wiſedome, and a great meanes of keeping a good Conſcience, to do that wherin we may *Tutiores vivere*, & to take to that which *Tutiſ-*

Propter incertitudinem propriæ Iuſtitiæ et periculum inanis gloriæ tutiſſimum eſt fiduciam totam in ſola Dei miſericordia et benignitate reponere. Bellar. de Iuſtific. lib. 5. cap. 7.

Tutiſsimum eſt, to follow that which is ſafeſt, and to take to that ſide which is the ſureſt, and the freeſt from danger.

Chap. VII.

Two markes of a good Conſcience.

THus we ſee how a good Conſcience may be had; it followes wee conſider how it may be knowne, and be diſcerned to be had. The markes and notes by which a good conſcience may be knowen, are *ſeven*.

1. Note of good conſcience. Conſcience in all things.

1. This in the text. In *all* good conſcience. It is a good note of a good conſcience, when a man makes conſcience of all things, all duties and al ſins. There bee that have naturall Conſciences principled by ſome generall grounds of nature, and it may be ſo farre as theſe rules carry them may make ſome conſcience, but their principles comming ſhort, they muſt needs alſo come as ſhort of a good Conſcience: *I have lived*, ſaies *Paul here*, *in all good*

good Conſcience, and *Heb.* 13. 18. *Wee truſt wee have a good Conſcience in all things*. It is a good Conſcience when a mans life, all his life is a life of Conſcience, when in al his life, and the whole tenour thereof he makes Conſcience of all that God commands, and forbids, *Pſame* 119. 6. *Then ſhall I not bee aſhamed*, (what breeds ſhame but evill conſcience?) *when I have reſpect vnto all thy Commandements*. When *all* are reſpected there is no ſhame, becauſe where all are reſpected there is good Conſcience, and where good Conſcience is, there is no ſhame. That argued *Davids* good Conſcience, *Pſal.* 119. 101. *I have refrained my feet from every evill way*.

Try mens conſciences by this, and it will diſcover a great deale of evill Conſcience in the world. Many a morall man makes Conſcience of doing his neighbour the leaſt wrong, he will not wrong or pinch any man, payes every man his owne, deales fairly and ſquarely in his commerce, there is no man

man can ſay blacke is his eye, you ſhall have him thanke God that hee hath as good a conſcience as the beſt. Theſe are good things, and ſuch things as men ought to make Conſcience of, but yet here is not enough to make a good Conſcience. A good conſcience muſt be *all* good Conſcience, or it is no good Conſcience. Now indeed theſe men may have good Conſciences *before men*, but my Text tels us that wee muſt live in *all* good conſcience *before God*. And *Paul* joynes them two together, *Act.* 24. 13. *And herein I doe exerciſe my ſelfe to have a good Conſcience voyd of offence towards God, and towards men.* Now bee it that theſe have good conſcience before men, yet what have they before God? Alas they are miſerably ignorant in the things of God, no cõſciences to acquaint themſelves with his truth, no conſcience of praier in their families, of reading the Scriptures, no Conſcience of an oath, and as little of the Sabbath, and the priuate duties thereof. How farre are theſe

theſe from good Conſcience.

Others againe ſeeme to make conſcience of their duties before God, but in the meane time no Conſcience of duties of Juſtice in the ſecond Table, make no conſcience of oppreſſion, racking rents, covetouſneſſe, over-reaching,&c. theſe are no better conſciences then the former, neither are good becauſe they live not in *all good* Conſcience. Thus may a man diſcover the naughty Conſciences of moſt. *Iehu* ſeemes wondrous zealous for the Lord, and ſeemes to be a man of a ſingular good Conſcience in the demoliſhing the Temple of *Baal*, and putting to death his Prieſts. I, but if *Iehu* make Conſcience of letting *Baals* Temple ſtand, why doth he not as well make Cõſcience of letting *Ieroboams* Calues ſtand. If *Iehu* had had a good conſcience, he would as ill have brookt *Ieroboams* as *Iezebels* Idolatry; he would have purged the Land of *all* Idols.

Herod ſeemes to make ſome Conſcience of an oath. *Marke 6.26. For his oathes*

oathes ſake he would not reject her. It is joy of him that he is a man of ſo good Conſcience. I, but in the meane time why makes he no Conſcience of inceſt and murther? Hee feares and makes Conſcience to breake an unlawfull oath, but makes no Conſcience to cut an holy Prophets throat. Who would not have thought *Saul* to have beene a man of a very good Conſcience? ſee how like a man of good Conſcience he ſpeakes. 1 *Sam.* 14. 34. *Sinne not againſt the Lord in eating with the blood.* Hee would have the people make Conſcience of eating with the blood, and indeed it was a thing to be made Conſcience of. I, but hee that makes conſcience of eating the fleſh of Sheepe and Oxen with the blood, like a bloody-hearted tyrant, as he was, he makes no conſcience of ſucking, and ſhedding the blood of foureſcore and five of Gods Prieſts. Iuſt the conſcience of his blood-hound *Doeg.* 1. *Sam* 21. 7. *Doeg was there that day deteined before the Lord.* How deteined? either out of

of a religious Conscience of the Sabbaths, or by occasion of a vow, the man made conscience of going before the Sabbath ere enwded, or the dayes of his vow finisht. A thing indeed to be made conscience of, men ought not to depart from Gods house till holy services be finisht, a duty that even the Prince must make conscience of, *Ezek.* 46. 10. Who therefore would not judge this *Edomite* a conscionable *Proselyte.* I, but why then makes hee no Conscience of lying? *Psal.* 27. Why no Conscience of being instrumentall to *Sauls* injustice in that barbarous villany of slaying not onely innocent men, but innocent Priest of the Lord? such were the Consciences of the chiefe Priests, *Math,* 27. 6. How like honest conscionable men they speake? *It is not lawfull for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.* Sure it is great cõscience ought to be made of bringing the price of blood into the Temple treasury; Are they not then men of good conscience, *It is not law-*

full, ye ſee they will not do that which is not lawfull. It is well, but tell me, is it not lawful to take the price of blood and is it lawfull to give a price for blood? Ought there not a Conſcience to be made of blood, as well as of the price of blood? They make a Conſcience of receiving the price of blood into the treaſury, but make no Conſcience of receiving the guilt of blood into their conſciences. Iuſt ſuch Conſciences as they had, *Ioh.* 18. 28. *They would not goe into the Iudgement Hall, leſt they ſhould be defiled, but that they might eate the Paſſover.* Indeed a man ſhould make great Conſcience of preparation to the Sacrament, and take great heed that he come not thither defiled; but ſee their naughty Conſcience, they make Conſcience of being defiled by going into the Iudgement Hall, but make no conſcience of being defiled with the blood of an Innocent. Such was the conſcience of the Iewes, *Ioh.* 19. 31. they make Conſcience of the body of Chriſt hanging upon the Croſſe

Qualis hæc innocentiæ ſimulatio; pecuniam ſanguinis non mittere in Arcam, & ipſum ſanguinem mittere in Conſcientiam. Auguſt.

Croſſe on the Sabbath, but with what conſcience have they hanged it on the Croſſe at all? This was juſt like to thoſe that *Socrates* ſpeakes of, who made great conſcience of keeping holy dayes, yet made no Conſcience of uncleanneſſe, that was but an indifferent thing with them. As if Conſcience were not rather to bee made of keeping our veſſels in holines, our bodies, then dayes holy? Remarkeable in this kinde is that dealing of the *Iewes* with *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 11.24. *Of the Iewes five times received I forty ſtripes ſave one.* If we look into the Law, *Deut.* 25.1,2. 3. it runs thus, *If there be a controverſie, &c. and it ſhall be if the wicked man be worthy to bee beaten, the Iudge ſhall cauſe him to lye downe, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certaine number, forty ſtripes hee may give him, and not exceed.* Now ſee the good conſciences of theſe *Iewes*, they might give forty ſtripes, but not beyond that number might they goe. Now they make ſo much conſcience

of exceeding the number of forty; that they give *Paul* but nine and thirty. Thus they make Conſcience of the number, but no conſcience of the fact. They make conſcience of giving above fortie, but with what Conſcience doe they give him any at all? The Text not onely preſcribes the number of ſtripes, but the condition of the perſon, namely, that he be *worthy to be beaten*, and he muſt be puniſhed *according to his fault*. Now ſee theſe men make Conſcience of the law for the number, but make no Conſcience of the Law, that will have only wicked men, and ſuch as are worthy to be beaten, to bee ſo uſed. Theſe be the good conſciences of wicked men, they make ſeeme of making conſcience in ſome one thing, but make no Conſcience often others, it may be, of farre greater weight, and neceſſity, and herein diſcover they the naughtineſſe of their conſciences. The conſcience therfore is not to be judged good for one, or ſome good actions. *Ioab* turned not after *Abſolom*, but hee turned

afrer

after *Adoniah*. 1 *King*. 1.28. Whereas a good conscienee that turnes neither to the right hand nor the left, would have turned neither after *Adoniah* nor *Absolom*. A good Conscience and a good conversation must goe together. 1 *Pet*. 3.16. *Having a good Conscience, that they may be ashamed that falsly accuse your good conversation*. One good action makes not a good conversation, nor a good cõscience, but then a mans cõversation may be said to be good, when in his whole course he is carefull to do all good duties, and to avoyd all sins, and such a good conversation is a signe of good Conscience.

To do some good things, & not all, is no more a signe of good Conscience, then to doe some things onely which his master requires, and to neglect other some, is no sign of a good servant. A good servants commendation is to doe all his Masters business he enjoynes him. We would hold him but an holy-day servant, and an idle companion, that when his master hath set

Nunc autem in hoc maior offensa est quod partem sententiæ sacræ pro communi eorum nostrorum utilitate deligimus, partem pro dei injuria.

him his ſeverall workes to doe, he will doe which him pleaſes, and leave the other undone. This were not to doe his maſters, but to doe his owne will, and to ſerve his owne turne rather then his maſters: So for a man to make choyce of duties, and to picke out ſome particulars, wherein hee will yeeld obedience to God, and to paſſe by others as not ſtanding with his profits, pleaſures, and luſts, this will never gaine a man the commendation of a good Conſcience, whoſe goodneſſe muſt be knowne by making conſcience of *all* things. Then have Gods ſervants good Conſciences, when it can be ſaid of them, as *Shaphan* ſpeakes of *Joſiah* his ſervants. 2 *Chron.* 34. 16. *All that was committed to thy ſervants, they do it.*

2. To make conſcience of ſmall Duties, and ſmall ſinnes. This alſo riſes out of the text. *All good Conſcience.* If of *all* things, then of *ſmall* things. It might have beene comprehended under the former, but yet for

Conviction

præterimus, Et maxime cum & terreſtres domini nequaquam æquo animo tolerandum putent ſi iuſſiones ſuas ſervi ex parte audiant & ex parte contemnant. Si enim pro arbitrio ſuo ſervi dominis obtemperant, ne in iis quidem in quibus obtemperaverint, obſequium tu vere. Salvian. de provid.

a Note of a good conſcience. Conſcience of ſmall Duties.

Conviction ſake I diſtinguiſh them. The good Conſcience makes not conſcience onely of great duties and ſins, but even of the leaſt, knowing that as Gods great power and omnipotence is the ſame in the making of an Angell and a worme, ſo Gods authority, wiſdome and holineſſe is the ſame in the leaſt Commandements as in the greateſt of them all. It makes Conſcience ſpecially of Iudgement and the weighty matters of the law, but yet doth not therefore thinke it ſelfe diſcharged of all care in ſmaller things, doth not thereupon challenge a diſpenſation from obedience in meaner matters, as if it were needleſſe ſcrupuloſitie, as too much preciſeneſſe to tythe Mint, Aniſe, and Cummin. A Cummine ſeed indeed is but a ſmall thing, a very toy, but yet as ſmall a thing, and as light as it is, yet will it lie heavy upon a good Conſcience, being injuriouſly and fraudulently detained from the Levites. The *Phariſees* tythed Mint, Aniſe, and Cummin, but they

neglected the weighty matters of the Law. It is no good Conſcience that lookes to ſmall and neglects great duties, neither is it a good cõſciẽce on the other ſide, that looks after the great and weighty duties, & makes no reckoning of Mint and Aniſe. Our Saviour ſayes both ought to be done. *Pharaoh* could be content that the people ſhould goe ſacrifice, but he cannot abide that *Moſes* ſhould be ſo peeviſhly preciſe, that not an hooſe ſhould be left behind. Alas, an hooſe is but a toy, not worth the mentioning, what need *Moſes* be ſo ſtrict as to ſtand upon an hooſe? Yet a good Conſcience will ſtand upon it, having Gods Cõmandement, and will make conſciẽce as well of carying away hooſs as of whole bodies of cattel. It is with a good conſcience as it is with the apple of the eye, of al the parts of the body it is the moſt tender, not onely of ſome great ſhives, or ſplints under the eye-lid, but even the ſmalleſt haire and duſt grieves and offends it. It is ſo with a tender good

Conſcience, not only beames, but alſo moats diſquiet the eye of a good conſcience, and not onely greater, and fouler ſins, but even ſuch as the world counts veniall trifles doe offend it. A good Conſcience ſtraines not onely at a Camell, but at a Gnat alſo. Neither doth our Saviour blame the *Phariſees* ſimply for ſtraining at a Gnat, but for their hypocriſie, who would pretend conſcience in ſmaller things, & meane while made none in the greater; for otherwiſe a good Conſcience indeede hath a narrow paſſage for a Gnat, as well as for a Camell. The leaſt corn of gravell galls his foote that hath a ſtrait ſhooe, but he that hath a large, wide ſhooe, ſlopping about his foot, it is no trouble to him. It is juſt ſo with conſciences good and evill.

A Gnat is but a ſmall thing, yet Pope *Hadrian* the fourth was choakt with a Gnat, and one fly, though but a ſmall thing to a whole box of oyntment, yet *dead flies*, as ſmall things as they are, *cauſe the oyntment of the Apothecary to ſend*

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send forth a stinking savour. Ec 10.1. and *so doth a little folly*, though but little, do a great deale of hurt. And therefore a good Cõscience lives by *Salomons* rule, *Give not water passage, no not a little*. And take not onely the *Foxes*, but the *little Foxes*, which spoile not onely the *Vines*, but the *tender Grapes*. Can. 2.15. It knowes a little while make way for much. *Pharaoh* is content that the people, the men should go sacrifice, *Exod.* 10. but their little *ones* should not goe; he knew if he had but their little *ones*, with him, he should be sure enough of their returne; therefore *Moses* will not onely have the men goe, but their *little ones* also. And therefore a good conscience deales with Satan, as *Marcus Arethusius* dealt with his tormentours, who having pulled downe an Idolatrous Temple, & being urged by them to give so much as would build it up againe, refused it; They urged him to give but halfe, he still refused, they urged him at last to give but a *little*, towards it, but he refused to give them so

Putantes pauperem vel mediocritatem petebant pecuniarum, novissime vel paucum aliquid exigebant. Quibus ait nec obolum unum pro.

ſo much as one halfe-penny, *No not an halfe-penny*, ſayes he, *for it is as great wickedneſſe to conferre one halfe penny in caſe of Impiety, as if a man ſhould beſtow the whole.* What was a poore half-penny? it was a very ſmall matter; ſpecially conſidering in what torture he was, from which an half-penny gift would have releaſed him. Indeed an half-penny is but a little, but yet it is more then a good Conſcience, dares give to the maintenance of idolatrous worſhip. A good Conſcience will not give ſo much as a farthing token to ſuch an uſe as little a thing as it is. *For he that is faithfull in that which is leaſt, is faithfull alſo in much, and he that is unjuſt in the leaſt, is unjuſt alſo in much*, Luke 16.10. Even the leaſt things are as great trials of a good cõſcience, as the greateſt. A good Conſcience will not gratifie Satan, nor neglect God, no not in a little.

omnibus dabo. Hiſt. Tripart. l.6.c.12. Ad impietatem inquit oboli conferre unum perinde valet ac ſi quis conferat omnia. Theodor: l.3 cap.7.

But mens conſciences now upon this trial. Who crackes not of his good cõſcience? there be none, if they may bee beleeved, but they have good Conſciences

ſciences. But why are they good? They can ſwallow no Camells. Well, yeeld them that, though if their entrals were well ſearcht, a man might finde huge bunch backt camells, that have gone downe their gullets. They can ſwallow no camells, but what ſay they to gnats, can they ſwallow them? Tuſh, Gnats are nothing, whole ſwarmes of them can goe downe their throats, and they never once cough for the matter. Foule and groſſe ſcandalls, ſuch as are infamous amõgſt meere heathen, ſuch Camells they ſwallow not, but what ſay they to unſavorie and naughtie thoughts which their hearts proſecute with delight, what ſay they to them? Gnats doe not ſwarme more abundantly in the fennes, then ſuch vile thoughts doe in their hearts. The prodigious oaths of wounds, blood, the damned language of Ruffians, and the Monſters of the earth, Oh their hearts would tremble to have ſuch words paſſe out of their mouths, but yet what ſay they to the neater, and civi-

civilified Complements of Faith and Troth? Tuſh theſe are trifles, meere Gnats, alas, that you ſhall ſtand upon ſuch niceties. To rob a man upon the high-way, or to breake up a mans houſe in the night, this is a monſtrous Camell, but in buying and ſelling to over-reach a neighbour a ſhilling or two, a penny or two, what ſay they to that? oh God forbid they ſhould be ſo ſtrictly dealt withall, that is a ſmall thing, their throats are not ſo narrow, but theſe Gnats will goe downe eaſily enough. To beare falſe witnes in an open Court of Iuſtice, or to be guilty of pillory perjury, theſe bee foule things, but to lye a little for a mans advantage or to make another man merriment, what thinke they of this? This is a very Gnat, they are aſhamed to ſtraine thereat. Tell many a man of his ſinne in which he lyes, that his ſinne and a good conſcience cānot ſtand together what is his anſwer, but as *Lot* of *Zoar*, *Is it not a little one. Gen.*19.20. But the truth is, that theſe little ones are great evi-

evidences of euill conſcience. It is but a dreame to thinke our Conſciences good, that make no conſcience of ſmal ſinnes and duties.

The conſcionable *Nazarite*, now, did not onely make conſcience of guzling and quaffing whole cups of wine, but of eating but an huske, and a kernel of a Grape. What a trifle is the kernell of a Grape, and yet a good conſcience will care to pleaſe God as well in abſtinence from the kernell, as from the cup. Indeed whem *Dauid* had defiled and hardned his conſcience with his adultery, then hee could cut *Vriahs* throat, and his heart ſmites him not for it, but when vnder his affliction his conſcience was tender & good, his heart ſmites him but for cutting *Sauls* coat, 1. *Sam.* 24. 5. See the nature of a good Conſcience, it will ſmite not onely for cutting *Sauls* throat, but for cutting *Sauls* coat, but for an appearance, vpon a ſuſpicion, and but a iealouſie of euill.

Paul ſpeakes of a *pure cõſcience*, 2. *Tim.* 1. 3.

1.3. Now it is with a pure cõſcience as it is with *pure religion*, Iam.1. 17. *Pure religion and vndefiled, is to keepe a mans ſelfe* vnſpotted *of the world*. It hates not onely wallowing with the Sow in the mire, but is ſhy of very ſpots, and *hates* not onely the *fleſh*, but the *garment*, not onely that is groſely beſmeared, but which is but *ſpotted with the fleſh*, *Iude* 23. according to that Ceremonial, *Leuit.* 15.17. And this is that which differences ciuility and a good conſcience, Ciuilitie ſhunnes myre, but is not ſo trimme as to waſh off ſpots, this is the pure Religion of a pure Conſcience. *Pure Religion and vndefiled, is to keepe a mans ſelfe vnſpotted*, therefore they who are not vnſpotted, are not vndefiled, but if their Conſciences bee but ſpotted, yet are they defiled. Mens Conſciences are as their Religion is, and pure Religion is ſpotleſſe.

Yea to cloſe this point, the greateſt euidence of a good cõſcience is in making conſcience of ſmal things. Whilſt men

men feare great ſins, or are careſull of maine duties, it may be their reputation and credits may ſway them, which otherwiſe would bee impeached. So that in them it may be a queſtion, whether it be conſcience or credit that is the firſt mver, buto in ſmaller things where there is no credit to be had, nay, for ſcrupling whereof, a man may rather receive ſome diſcredit from the world, here it is more evident that good Conſcience ſets a man on. This then is a note of a good conſcience, to make Conſcience, as of ſmall duties, ſo of ſmall ſinnes, as he that feares poiſon feares to take a droppe, as well as a draught, & men feare not onely when a firebrand is thruſt into, but when a ſparke lights upon their thatch.

Probat enim etiam in maioribus ſires exigat executorem ſe idoneum forc à quo minora eõpleantur. Saluian. de provid. l. 3.

Chap. VIII.

Three other notes of a good Conſcience.

A Third note of good Conſcience may be this. It loves and likes a Mini-

Miniſtrie and ſuch Miniſters as preach, and ſpeake to the Conſcience. It likes ſuch a diſpenſation of the Word as comes home to it, whether for direction or reproofe. The Word is the rule of conſcience, and a good conſcience is deſirous to know the rule it muſt liue by. The Word muſt iudge the conſcience, this euery good conſcience knowes, and therefore grudges not to be reproued by it, as kno ving that if it will not abide the Words reproofe, it muſt abide the Words iudgement. Therefore a man with a good Conſcience ſpeakes as *Samuel, Speake Lord, thy ſeruant heares.* He can ſuffer the words of exhortation, and not count himſelfe to ſuffer whilſt it is done. He is of *Dauids* minde, *Let the righteous ſmite me, and it ſhall be a kindneſſe; let him reproue me and it ſhall bee an excellent oyle which ſhall not breake mine head. Pſal.* 141.5. It is with good conſcience as with good eyes that can abide the light, and can delight in it, whereas ſicke and ſore eyes are troubled and offended there-

3. Note of good Conſcience: To loue a Miniſtry that ſpeaks home to the Conſcience.

with. A ſound heart is like ſound fleſh that can abide not onely touching, but alſo rubbing and chafing, and yet a man will not bee put into a chafe thereby; whereas contrarily if the leaſt thorne or vnſoundneſſe bee therein, a touch at vnawares prouokes a man, if not to ſmite, yet to angry words and language of diſpleaſure. Vnſound fleſh loues to be ſtroakt, and to be handled gently, the leaſt roughneſſe puts into a rage. That is the ingenuity of a good Conſcience, which was the good diſpoſition of *Alipius*, when hee was vnwittingly taxed by *Auguſtine* for his Theatricall vanities; hee was ſo farre from being angry with him, though he conceiued him purpoſely to ayme at him, that hee was rather angry with himſelfe, and loued *Auguſtine* ſo much the better.

Tu ſcis Deus noſter, quod tunc de Alipio ab illa peſte ſanando non cogitauerim. At ille in ſe rapuit meq; illud non niſi propter ſe dixiſſe credidit, & quod alius acciperet ad ſuccenſendum mihi, accepit honeſtus adoleſcens ad ſuccenſendum ſibi, & ad me ardentius diligendum. Aug. conf. lib. 6. ca. 7.

Put mens conſciences vpon this triall, and we ſhall ſee what the conſciences of moſt men are. Let a man preach in an vnprofitable maner, let him ſpend himſelfe in idle curioſities & ſpeculations,

lations, let him be in combate with obſolete or forrain hereſies, ſo long their Miniſter is a faire and a good Churchman. But let him do as God cõmands *Ezekiel* to doe, *Ezek.* 14.4. *Anſwer them according to their Idols*, preach to their neceſſities, let him call them, & preſſe them to holy duties, and reproue them for their vnholy practiſes, and make knowne vnto them what euill Conſciences they have: what then is their carriage & behauiour? Euen that, *Amos* 5. 10. *They hate him that rebukes in the gate; and they abhorre him that ſpeaks vprightly*. This Miniſtry that comes to the Conſcience will not downe with them. It lets in too much light vpon them, & *Ahab* hates *Micaiah* for drawing the curtaines ſo wide open, he cannot endure ſuch punctual & particular preaching, that clappes ſo cloſe to his Conſcience. A plaine ſigne that *Ahab* hath a rotten and an vnſound Conſcience. *Micaiah* could not be more punctuall with *Ahab*, then *Iſaiah* was with *Hezekiah*, *Iſa.* 39. 6. 7. And yet what

Scio me offenſurum quàm plurimos qui generalem de vitiis diſputationem inſuam referunt contumeliam, & dum mihi irascuntur ſuam iudicant conſcientiam, multòq; prius de ſe quam de me iudicant. Hieron. ad Ruſtic. Monach.

ſayes *Ezekiah? Good is the word of the Lord which thou haſt ſpoken*; as if he had ſaid, a good Sermon, a good Preacher, all good. Whence comes this good entertainemēt of ſo harſh a meſſage! *Hezekiah* had a good Conſcience, and therefore though the meſſage went againſt the haire, yet hee could giue good words, *Let the righteous ſmite me, and it ſhall be a kindneſſe*, *Pſal.* 141. I, but that is when the righteous ſmites the righteous, what if the Prophet ſmite *Amaziah?* he wil threaten to ſmite him againe, 2. *Chron.* 25. 16. *Forbeare, why ſhouldeſt thou be ſmitten?* Why if *Paul* preach of a good Conſcience, and ſo make *Ananias* his Conſcience to ſmite him? *Ananias* will command the ſtanders by to ſmite him on the mouth. Now let all the ſtanders by iudge whether *Ananias* haue any good Conſcience in him, who cannot brooke the preaching of good Conſcience. Let men profeſſe they know God as long as they wil, yet if they ſlight the word, or ſwell at it, or bee diſobedient to it when

when it is laid to their Conſcience, *Paul* makes it a manifeſt ſigne of a defiled cõſcience, *Tit.* 1.15,16. *Their minde and their conſciences is defiled.* How appeares that? *They profeſſe they know God, but they are diſobedient.* When therefore the Miniſtry of the Word ſhall charge thee with dutie, or reprooue thee for ſin, and then thou ſhalt charge the Miniſter with railing, and girding, & that this Sermon was made for the nonce for thee, & thou likeſt not that Miniſters ſhould be ſo particular, &c. In Gods feare be aduiſed to looke to thy Conſcience, and know it that thou haſt a naughtie Conſcience: when the Miniſtry of the Word ſmites thy conſcience, then for thee to ſmite the Miniſter with reproachfull & diſgracefull tearmes, to ſmite him with thy mouth: How is thy conſcience better then *Ananias* his, that commands to ſmite *Paul* on the mouth? hee that cannot brook that Gods Miniſters ſhould not diſcharge a good Conſcience in preaching to the Conſcience, be bold to

challenge that man for a man of an euill conſcience.

4. That is a fourth note of a good conſcience, *Rom.* 13. 5. ye muſt be ſubiect *for Conſcience ſake*. To doe good or abſtaine from euill meerly for conſcience ſake, is a note of a right good conſcience indeed. Conſcience, as we ſaw before, doth excite and ſtirre vp, and binde to the doing of good, and binds from the doing of euil. Now when the Conſcience vpon iuſt information frō the Word ſhall preſſe, and forbid, and thē a man ſhall, becauſe cōſcience forbids, forbear; or becauſe it preſſes, performe obedience: thus to doe good, or not to do euill, for Conſcience ſake, is a note of a good Conſcience. It euidences a good Conſcience when the maine weight that ſets the wheeles on work is conſcience of Gods commandement. When it is that, *Pſal.* 119. 4. that ſets a man on work, *Thou haſt commanded vs to keepe thy precepts diligently*. The end of the commandemēt is loue, 1. *Tim.* 1. 5. and *loue is the fulfilling of*

4. Note of a good conſcience. To do duty for Conſcience ſake.

of the commandement, Rom. 12. But what loue? *From a pure heart and a good conſcience,* 1. *Tim.* 1. 5. When conſcience of the commandement caries a man to the fulfilling of the end of it, then doth ſuch loue come from a good Conſcience. *Salomons* deſcription of a good man, *Eccl.* 9. 2. is that *hee feares an oath.* He ſayes not, that ſweares not; but that feares an oath. For a man not to ſweare may be the fruit of good education, and of the awe a man hath ſtood in of his Gouernours, but to *feare an oath*, argues that a man *feares the commandement, Prou.* 13. 13. and to feare the commandement is the note of a good conſcience.

Here let mens conſciences be tried. Thou prayeſt in thy family, heareſt the Word, keepeſt the Sabbath, &c. Now ſearch thine heart, and make inquirie what it is that carieth thee to theſe duties. Doeſt thou doe them for conſcience ſake? Doſt thou find Conſcience to vrge and preſſe thee, & to giue ſatisfaction of the Conſcience, and obedi

ence to the iniunctions thereof. Are theſe things done? If ſo, it is a ſigne of a good Conſcience. But this diſcouers the naughtineſſe of mens conſciences, who though they bee found in ſome good duties, or in the auoiding of ſome euils, yet is it not conſcience that workes them thereto. *Yee muſt be ſubiect not onely for wrath*, that is, for feare of the Magiſtrates wrath and reuenge, *but for conſcience ſake*, *Rom.* 13.5. It is no good Conſcience when a man will bee ſubiect for his skins ſake, and leſt hee ſmart by the Magiſtrates ſword, but then a mans Conſcience is good, when in obedience to Gods Word, and in conſcience of his Commandement hee ſubiects. The like may be ſaid of all byends. Ye muſt doe good duties, not for profit, not for credit, not for vaineglory, not for law, but for conſcience ſake; or elſe euill conſciences yee haue in that ye do. The *Shechemites* receiue circumciſion, *Gen.* 34. And is not circumciſion Gods Ordinance? And is it not ioy of them that they will ioyne

to

to the Church, and profeſſe the true Religion? Yes ſurely, if it were done for conſcience. I, but it is not done for conſcience ſake? Alas no ſuch matter, but for *Hamors* ſake the Lord of the Towne, and for *Shechems* ſake their yong maſter, and for the hope of gains ſake: *Shall not their cattell, and their ſubſtance, and euery beaſt of theirs be ours? Gen.* 34.23. For the oxen ſake, and not for conſcience ſake are the *Shechemites* circumciſed. *Shechem* for *Dinahs* ſake receiues the Sacrament. Oh the zeale and forwardneſs that ſome wil profeſs on a ſudden What frequenters of holy exerciſes? But what, is it for Conſcience ſake? No ſuch matter, but *Shechem* is in hope of a match with *Dinah*, & all theſe ſhewes of Religion are neither for Gods ſake, nor cõſcience ſake, but all for *Dinahs* ſake, all vnder hope of preferment by a rich mariage. They were goodly ſhewes of zeale, *Iohn.* 6. 22. 24. in ſeeking and following after Chriſt, but it was neither for Chriſt, nor conſcience ſake, but *ver.* 26. for the loaues,

loaues, and the bread, and their bellies ſake.

Many of the heathens, *Eſth.* 8. 17. *turned Iewes.* Was there not ioy of ſuch Proſelytes? not a whit, for not the fear of God, but *the feare of the Iewes fell vpon them*; as many frequent the publike aſſemblies more for feare of the ſtatute, then for feare of the commandement. The officers of the King helped the Iewes, *Eſth.* 9. 3. Was it for conſcience ſake? Nothing leſſe, but for wrath ſake and for feare, *becauſe the feare of Mordecai fell vpon them.*

If the Phariſees had done all that (*Mat.* 6.) for Conſcience ſake, which they did for vaine-glory ſake, they had had the glory of good Conſciences. Many preached the Goſpell in *Pauls* dayes, *Phil.* 1. Does not ſo good a worke argue a good conſcience? Yes, if it had beene done for Conſcience ſake; but that was done for contention ſake, not to adde ſoules to the Church, but to adde ſorrowes to *Pauls* afflictions.

It

It is a note of a good Conſcience, when that which wee doe is done with a reſpect vnto the commandement of God, *Pſal.* 119. 6. and not with a ſquint reſpect vnto our own priuate, for praiſe or profit. It was a good argument of thoſe *Bohemians* good Conſciences in plucking downe Images, that they beate downe only painted and woodden Images, whileſt *Sigiſmund* the Emperour pulled downe ſiluer and golden ones, to melt into money for pay of his ſouldiers, as they plead for themſelues, when they were held Heretiques for their fact. If they had puld downe ſuch Images as hee did, they might haue beene thought to haue done it for gaine, and not for Conſcience ſake.

Vtrine maiores heretici? illine qui pictas & ligneas, an qui aureas & argenteas imagines è templis exigerent, & ad conflandam monetam igne adurerent? Dubr. hiſt. Bohc. l. 24.

How great is often the zeale of many againſt faſhions, and ſuch vanities? How well it were if it were for Conſcience ſake, and not for enuy againſt ſome particular perſon, whom they do diſtaſte, and ſo for the perſon, the vanitie. For if it be for conſcience ſake, how

how is it that thoſe vanities, ſuch great offences to their Conſciences, found in ſome diſtaſted perſons, are yet no trouble to their conſciences, being the very ſame, if not worſe in their owne fauorites, and aſſociates? Iudge whether ſuch zeale come from Conſcience, or from corrupt affection, whether it be not more againſt the perſon, then againſt the ſinne.

5. Note of a good conſcience. Holy boldneſſe. *Bona conſcientia prodire vult & conſpici, ipſas nequitia tenebras timet.* Senec. ep 98. *Qui non deliquit decet audacem eſſe & confidenter pro ſe, & proterue loqui.* Plaut. in Anph.

5. We haue a fift note of a good conſcience in the text. *And Paul earneſtly beholding the Councell.* Here is a marke of a good Conſcience in his lookes, as well as in his words; in his face as well as in his ſpeech. *Paul* is here conuented before the Councell, with what face is he able to behold them? And *Paul* earneſtly *beholding the Councell*, A good conſcience makes a man hold vp his head euen in the thickeſt of his enemies. It can looke them in the faces, and out-face a whole rabble of them aſſembled on purpoſe to caſt diſgrace on it. That may bee ſaid of a man with a good Conſcience, which is

ſpoker

ſpoken of ſome of *Dauids* men, 1. *Chron.* 12.8. *Whoſe faces were like the faces of Lyons, for the righteous is bold as a Lyon, Pro.* 28.1. Now might *Paul* truely haue ſaid, as *Dauid, Pſ.* 57.4. *My ſoule is among Lions, I lye among them that are ſet on fire.* And now how fares hee? what is he all amort? lookes hee pale and blanke? doth hee ſneake or hang downe his head, or droope with a deiected countenance? No, *Paul* is as bold as a Lyon, and can face theſe Lyons, and *earneſtly* fixe his countenance vpon the beſt of them. A good Conſcience makes a mans face as God had made *Ezekiels*, *Ezek.* 3.8.9. *Behold I haue made they face ſtrong againſt their faces, and thy forehead ſtrong againſt their foreheads. As an Adamant harder then flint haue I made thy forehead, feare them not, neither bee diſmaid at their lookes.* Such hartening and hardening comes alſo from a good Conſcience. A good Conſcience makes a man goe, as the Lord in another ſenſe tells Iſrael hee had done for them, *Leuit.* 26. 13.

I have made you goe upright. A good Conſcience erects a mans face, and lookes, it is no ſneaking ſlinker, but makes a man goe upright. As contrarily, guilt deiects both a mans ſpirits, and his lookes, and unleſſe a man have a Sodomiticall impudency, *Iſa.* 3. 9. or an whores forehead, *Ieremiah* 3. 3. which refuſes to bee aſhamed, makes him hang downe the head.

Paul fixes his eyes here, and lookes earneſtly upon them, but what if they had looked as earneſtly upon him? yet would not his good Conſcience have beene out-faced. See *Acts* 6. 15. *All that ſate in the Counſell looked ſtedfaſtly on him*; namely on *Steven.* If but the high Prieſt alone had faced him, it had beene ſomewhat, but all that ſate at the Counſell looked ſtedfaſtly on him. Surely one would thinke ſuch a preſence were able to haue damped, and utterly to have daſhed him out of countenance. But how is it with him? Is hee appalled? Is

Is he damped? *They ſaw his face as it had beene the face of an Angel*, ſayes the text. As wiſedome, *Eccl.* 8. 1. ſo a good Conſcience makes the face to ſhine. A good Conſcience hath not onely a *Lions*, but an *Angels* face; it hath not onely a Lion-like boldneſſe, but an Angelicall dazling brightneſſe, which the ſicke and ſore eyes of malice can as ill endure to behold, as the Iſraelites could the ſhining brightneſſe of *Moſes* face. The face of a good conſcience tels enemies that they are malicious lyers. And no wonder that a good Conſcience hath ſuch courage & confidence in the face, ſtanding before a whole councel, when it ſhall be able to hold up it head with boldneſſe before the Lord himſelfe, at that great day of the generall Iudgement. Even then ſhal a good cõſcience have a bold face.

CHAP.

Chap. IX.

Two other, and the laſt notes of a good Conſcience.

6. Note of conſcience To ſuffer for conſcience.

A Sixt note of a good Conſcience followes, namely, that which we haue, 1. *Pet.* 2. 19. When a man *for Conſcience towards God endures griefe, ſuffering wrong.* A good Conſcience had rather that *Ananias* ſhould ſmite, then it ſelfe ſhould. *Ananias* his blowes are nothing to the blowes of Conſcience. *Ananias* may make *Pauls* cheekes glow, but conſcience giues ſuch terrible buffets, as will make the ſtouteſt heart in the world to ake. That will pinch, and twitch and gird the heart with ſuch griping throws, that all the blowes, and tortures that *Ananias* his cruell heart can inuent are nothing to them.

Now therefore a man that ſets any ſtore by a good conſcience, will not part with the Peace or Integritie there of

of vpon any terms. He rates the goodneſſe of his Conſcience farre aboue all earthly things. Wealth, liberty, wife, children, life it ſelfe, all are vile, and cheape in compariſon of it. And therefore a man of a good Conſcience will endure any griefe, & ſuffer any wrong to keepe his conſcience good towards God. Such a good Conſcience had *Daniel*, *Dan.* 1. 8. *Hee purpoſed in his heart that hee would not defile himſelfe with the portion of the Kings meat.* That is, he was fully ſetled & reſolued in his Conſcience, come what would come, he would not do that which would not ſtand with a good cõſcience. But what if it could haue gotten no other meat? Without all doubt hee would rather haue ſtarued then haue defiled his conſcience with that meat. He would haue loſt his life rather then haue loſt the Peace, and Integrity of his Conſcience. It ſeemes a queſtion of great difficulty, which was put to the three Children, *Dan.* 3. Whether they will giue the bowing of their bodies to the

golden Idoll, or the burning of their bodies to the fiery Fornace. But yet they finde no ſuch difficulty therein, they were not carefull to anſwere in that matter, *ver.* 16. Of the two fires they chooſe the cooleſt, & the eaſieſt. The fire of a guilty conſcience is ſeauen times hotter, & more intolerable then the fire of *Nebucadnezzars* Fornace, thought it be heated ſeuen times more then it is wont to be heated.

If the queſtion come betwene life and good Conſcience, that one of the two muſt bee parted withall, it is an hard caſe. Life is wondrous ſweet and precious. Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he giue for his life, *Iob* 2. 4. What then ſhould a man do in ſuch an hard caſe? Heare what is the reſolution of a good conſcience, *Act.* 20. 24. *My life not deare vnto me, ſo that I may fulfill my Miniſtration with ioy.* And wherein lay his ioy, but in his good Conſcience, 2. *Cor.* 1. 12. It is all one as if hee had ſaid, I care not to loſe my life to keepe a good Conſcience. A

good

good Conſcience in that paſſage of the Apoſtle, 1. *Tim.* 1. 19. is ſecretly compared to a ſhip. Now in a tempeſt at Sea, when the queſtion is come to this, whether the goods ſhal be caſt out, or the Ship be caſt away, what doe the Mariners? See *Act.* 27. 18. 38. *They lightned the ſhip, & caſt out the wheat into the Sea.* The Mariners will turne the richeſt Commodities ouer-boord to ſaue the ſhip, for they know if the ſhip be caſt away, then themſelues are caſt away. Thus it is with a man that hath a good conſcience, when the caſe comes to this pinch, that either his outward Cõforts, or his inward Peace muſt wrack, he will chearefully *caſt the wheat into the Sea*: will part with all earthly commodities & comforts, before he will ruſh, and wrack his conſcience vpon any rock. He knowes if the ſhip be wrackt, if his Conſcience bee crackt, that then himſelf, & his ſoule is in danger of being caſt away, & therefore he wil throw away all to ſaue conſcience from being ſplit vpon the rocks

and being ſwallowed vp in the ſands.

There is as great a difference between a good Conſcience, and all outward things euen vnto life it ſelfe, as is between the arme, and the head or heart. The braine & the heart are vitall parts, therefore when the head is in danger to bee cleft, or the heart to bee thruſt through, a man will not ſtand queſtioning whether he were beſt aduenture his hand, or his arme to ſaue his head, or his heart, but either of theſe being in dãger, the hand & the arme preſently interpoſe themſelues to receiue the blow, and put themſelues in danger of being wounded, or cut off, rather then the head or heart ſhould be pierced. A man may haue his hand, or arme cut off, and yet may liue, but a wound in the braine or heart is mortal. It is ſo in this caſe. A good conſcience values its owne peace aboue all the world. It is that wherein a Chriſtians life lyes, therefore hee will ſuffer the right hand or foot to be cut off, and loſe all rather then expoſe Conſcience to danger.

A man may go to heauen with the loſſe a limbe,& though he halte, *Mat.* 18.8. but if a man loſe his life, if Conſcience be loſt, all is loſt. A man may goe to heauen thuogh he loſe riches, liberty, life, but if a good Conſcience be loſt, there is no comming thither. All things compared to Conſcience are as far beneath it, as the leaſt finger beneath the head. He were a mad man that would ſuffer his skull to bee cleft to ſaue his little finger, nay but the paring of his nayle. And yet the world is full of ſuch mad men, that ſuffer conſcience to receiue many a deep wound and gaſh, to ſaue thoſe things which in compariſon of good Conſcience, are but as the nayle parings to the head.

Try mens Conſciences here, and we ſhall finde them exceeding ſhort. A good cõſcience wil endure any griefe, and ſuffer any wrong rather then ſuffer the loſſe of its owne peace. God commands *Amaziah*, 2. Chron. 25. to put away *Iſrael*, oh! but *what ſhall I*

doe for mine hundred Talents? Tuſh, what are an hundred Talents? A good Conſcience in yeelding obedience to God is a richer treaſure then the Eaſt and Weſt *Indies*. And yet how many be there that will craze their Conſcience an hundred times before they wil loſe one Talent by obedience to God, out of a care to keepe a good Conſcience. A talent? nay, that is too deepe, neuer put them to that coſt, they will ſell a good conſcience, not for gaining, but for the taking of a farthing token. God and good Conſcience ſay, *Sanctifie the Sabbath*. Poſſibily ſome halfe-penny cuſtomer comes to a Tradesmans Shop on a Sabbath, and askes the ſale of ſuch, or ſuch a cammoditie. Now the mans Conſcience tels him of the commandement, tels him what God lookes for, tels him it cannot ſtand with his peace to make markets on that day, &c. But then he tels conſcience, that if he be ſo preciſe, he may loſe a cuſtomer, and if hee loſe his cuſtomers, he may ſhut vp his Shop-windowes.

windowes. An Inne-keepers Conſcience tels him that it is fitter that hee ſhould bee attending Gods ſeruice at his houſe on his day, then that hee ſhould bee waiting on his gueſts. But then he replies to conſcience, that then his takings will be but poore, & this is the next way to pluck down his ſigne. So here lyes a diſpute between conſcience and Gaine, which of theſe two muſt be parted with. If now in this caſe a man will grow to this reſolution; By Gods helpe I am reſolued to keepe a good Conſcience in keeping Gods Commandement and Sabbath, I will rather loſe the beſt cuſtomer I haue, & the beſt gueſt I haue, then the peace of a good Conſcience. If I beg, I beg; I will ſay of my cuſtomers as *Iacob* of his children, *Gen.* 43. 14. *If I am bereaued of them, I am bereaued.* I will truſt God with my eſtate, before I will hazard my conſcience; Giue me ſuch a man, ſuch a Tradeſman, and I will be bold to ſay he is a man of a good conſcience. But contrarily, when men are

ſo ſet vpon Gaine, that ſo they may haue it, they care not how they come by it, they will diſpenſe an hundred times with their obedience to God if any thing be to bee had, if theſe haue good Conſciences let any iudge. How would ſuch loſe their blood and liues, that will not loſe ſuch trifling gaines for the ſafetie of their cõſcience? We *haue not yet reſiſted vnto blood*, the more we owe to God, that know not what that reſiſtance meanes. Alas, how would thoſe reſiſt vnto blood that ſet Conſcience to ſale vpon ſo baſe prices as they doe.

Peter ſpeakes of a *fiery tryall*, 1. *Pet.* 4. 12. If God ſhould euer bring that trial amongſt vs, what a company of droſſie Conſciences would it find out? We haue no *fiery tryall*, we haue but an *airy tryall* onely, and yet how many euill conſciences it diſcouers. Many a man could finde in his heart to pray in his family, to frequent good exerciſes, & company, hee is conuinced in his conſcience, that thus he ſhould doe, and Con-

Conſcience preſſes him to it. But why then are not theſe things done? *A Lyon is in the way.* He ſhall loſe the good word and opinion of the world, hee ſhall haue ſo many frowns, & frumpes, and cenſures, and ſcoffes, that he cannot buckle to this courſe. Many are in *Zedekiah* his caſe; he was conuinced in his conſcience, that he ought, & it was his ſafeſt courſe to go out to the *Chaldeans*, queſtionles his conſcience preſt him to it, and bids him go out. Why then goes he not? He is afraid, *Ier.* 38. 19. *that he ſhall be mockt.* Such Conſciences as will not preferre their owne good word a comfort before the good or ill words of the world; Such conſciences as more feare the mockes and flouts of men on earth, then they doe the grinning mocks of the Deuils in hell; Such as will not preferre the peace of Conſcience before all other things, are meere ſtrangers to good Conſcience.

7. Note of a good conſcience.

The ſeuenth and laſt note remains. And that is in the Text, *Vntill this day.*

Con-

Conſtancy in good.

Conſtancy and *perſeuerance* in good, is a ſure note of a good conſcience. *Paul* had beene young, and now was old, & yet was old *Paul* ſtill, ſtill the ſame holy man he was. Time changes all things but a good Conſcience, and that is neither changed by Time, nor with Time, Age changes a mans fauour, but not a good mans faith; his complexion, not his religion; and though his head turn gray, yet his heart holds vigorous ſtill.

Vntill this day.] And this day was not far from his dying day. And how held he out to his laſt day? Heare as it were his laſt and dying breath, 2. *Tim.* 4. 7. *I haue fought a good fight, I haue finiſhed my courſe, I haue kept the faith.* He ſayes not, I haue finiſhed my faith, I haue kept my life, as many may, but *I haue finiſhed my courſe, I haue kept the faith.* He kept his faith til he had finiſht his courſe, not only here, *vntil this day*, but there vntill his finiſhing day. So long he kept the faith, and therefore ſo long a good Conſcience, for as the loſing

ſing of them goe together. 1. *Tim.* 1. 19. ſo the keeping of them goe together, therefore keeping the faith, he alſo kept a good Conſcience till he finiſht his dayes.

Vntill this day. And yet one would wonder that he ſhould keepe it to this day, conſidering how hardly he had bin vſed before, vntill, and now at this day, The moſt of thoſe things. 2. *Cor.* 11. 23. were before this day. *Often vnder ſtripes, in priſons oft,* and yet ſtands conſtant in the maintenance of the libertie of his Conſcience, *verſ.* 24. 25. *Thrice I ſuffered ſhipwracke, &c.* and yet made no ſhipwracke of a good conſcience, *verſ.* 26. 27. in a number of perils, in *perill of falſe brethren*, & yet his conſcience playes not falſe with God, neither is it weary of going on in a religious courſe.

Here then is the nature of a good conſcience, and the tryall of it.

A good conſcience holds out conſtantly in a good *Cauſe* without *deflection*, and in a good *Courſe* without

out *defection.*

1. In a *good cauſe.* Let a good Conſcience vndertake the defence of a good Cauſe, and it will ſtand rightly to it, & neither grow weary, not corrupt. It will not make ſhews of countenancing *Pauls* cauſe till he come before *Nero*, & then giue him the ſlippe, and giue him leaue to ſtand vpon his owne bottome, and ſhift for himſelfe as well as he can. A conſcienable Magiſtrate, & a Iudge, who out of a conſcience of the faithful diſcharge of his place, takes in hand the defence of a good, or the puniſhment of a bad cauſe, will not leaue it in the ſuddes, wil not be wrought by feare or fauour, to let Innocency bee thruſt to the walles, and Iniquitie hold vp the neb, but will ſtand out ſtiffe, and manifeſt the goodneſſe of his conſcience in his Conſtancie.

2. In a *good Courſe.* A man that is once in a good Courſe, hauing a good conſcience, will neither bee driuen, nor be drawne out of that good way to his dying day. There be tentations on the right

right hand, and there be tentations on the left, but yet a good Cõſcience will turne neither way, *Pro.* 4.27. but keeps on fore right, and preſſes hard to the marke that is ſet before it; Try it with tentations on the left hand. Try it by the mockings and deriſions of others whom it ſees in good wayes, will this ſtagger or ſtumble it, & make it ſtart aſide? Not a whit, but it wil go on with ſo much the more courage rather, *Iob* 17.6.7.8.9. *He hath made mee alſo a by-word of the people, and aforetime I was a Tabret.* Was not this enough to ſhake others, to ſee ſuch a prime man as *Iob* thus vſed, thus ſcorned and mocked? Not a whit; for all this, *The righteous ſhall hold on his way, & he that hath clean hands, be ſtronger and ſtronger.*

Try it by mockings and deriſions perſonall, by perſonall infamy and reproach, let a mans owne ſelfe bee derided, be defamed, this will goe neerer then the former, what, will this moue him out of the way? No: He will loſe his good name, before his good con-

Si reddere beneficium non aliter quam per ſpeciem iniuria potero æquiſſimo animo ad honeſtum

cõſilium per mediam infamiam tendam. Nemo mihi videtur pluris virtutem, nemo illi magis eſſe deuotus quam qui boni viri famam perdidit ne cõſcientiam perderet. Senec. epi. 82.

Conſcience. See *Pſ.* 119.51. *The proud haue had me greatly in deriſion, yet haue I not declined from thy law.* And though *Michol*, 2. *Sam.* 6. play the flouting foole, yet *Dauid* will not play the declining foole, but if to be zealous, bee to be a foole, he will *bee yet more vile.* And though *Ieremy* was in *deriſion daily, and euery one mocked him*, yea, *and defamed him*, yet he was rather the more then the leſſe zealous, *Ier.* 20.7. 9.10. The righteous *Pſ.* 135.1. are *like Mount Sion that cannot bee remoued, but abides for euer.* What likelihood that a puffe of breath ſhould remoue a Mountain? When men can blowe downe Mountaines with their breath, then may they ſcoff a good cõſcience out of the waies of godlineſſe & ſinceritie. Mount *Sion*, and a good Conſcience abide for euer.

But theſe happily may be thought lighter trialls, put a good conſcience to ſome more ſmarting, and bleeding tryals, then theſe pettier ones are, and yet there ſhall we finde it as conſtant as in the former.

Let

Let the Lord giue the *Sabaans*, *Chaldaans*, and Satan leaue to ſpoyle *Iob* of his goods, and children, will not then *Iob* giue vp his Integrity? doe yee not thinke that he will curſe GOD to his face? So indeed the deuil hopes, *Iob* 1. 15. But what is the iſſue? what gets the deuill by the tryall? onely giues GOD argument of triumph againſt him in *Iobs* conſtancy, *Iob* 2.3. *And ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity.* As if he had ſaid, See for al that thou canſt do, in ſpight of all thy ſpite, and miſchieuous malice, hee holds faſt his Integrity vntill this day. See the terrible trials, to which they were put, *Heb.* 11.37. *They were ſtoned, ſawne aſunder, &c.* and yet all could not make them ſhake hands with a good Conſcience. The raine, floods, and winds, could not bring downe the houſe founded vpon the rocke, *Matth.* 7. Notwithſtanding all tryals, a good Conſcience ſtands to it, and holds it owne, and ſpeakes as once Father *Rawlins* did to the Biſhop, *Rawlins you left me, Rawlins you finde me, and Raw-*

A s and Mon.

Rawlins by Gods grace I will continue.

Try yet a good Conſcience farther with the tentations on the right hand, which commonly haue as much more ſtrenght in them aboue the other, as the right hand hath aboue the left, and yet we ſhall finde the right hand too weake to plucke a good Conſcience out of its ſtation.

It was a ſore tentation wherewith *Moſes* was aſſaulted. The treaſures, and pleaſures, the honours and fauours of the Egyptian Court, and Princeſſe. Al theſe wooe him not to goe to the people of God. Had that people been ſetled and at reſt in Canaan, yet had it bin a great tentation to prefer Egypt before Canaan. But the people are in Egypt, in affliction, in bondage, therfore ſo much the more ſtrength in the tentation. What will you be ſo mad to leaue all for nothing, certaine honours for certaine afflictions? who can tell but you may be raiſed to this greatnes to be an inſtrument of good to your people! you by your fauour in the Court

Court may bee means to eaſe them of their bondage, and ſo you may do the Church ſeruice with your greatneſſe, &c. Here was a tentation on the right hand, & with the right hands ſtrength. Well, and how ſpeeds it? Is *Moſes* able to withſtand it? See *Heb.* 11.24.25.26. *He refuſed to bee called the ſonne of Pharaohs daghter, &c.* All would not doe, nor ſtirre him a whit. Thoſe faithfull Worthies before mentioned, could not bee ſtirred with all the cruelties their aduerſaries could inuent. I, but it may bee a tentation on the right hand, might haue made them draw away the right hand of fellowſhip from a good conſcience. Well, their enemies therfore will try what good they can doe that wayes. *Heb.* 12.37. *They were tempted*, that is, on the right hand they were ſollicited and enticed, and allured with faire promiſes of honours, fauours, preferments, as *Bonner* vſed to deale with the Martyrs, hee had ſometimes butter and oyle, as wel as fire and faggot, in his mouth.

Thus were they tempted, but yet what auailed theſe tentations? Iuſt as much as their ſtones, ſawes, ſwords, priſons, all a like. They for all theſe tentations keepe a good conſcience to their dying day, and hold faſt the faith and truth vnto the end.

A good conſcience is of the mind of thoſe tree, in *Iothams* parable, *Iudg.* 9. It will not with the Oliue loſe its *fatneſs*, nor with the Figtree loſe its *ſweetnes*, nor with the Vine its *wine* of cheerfulneſſe, to haue the fatteſt, and ſweeteſt preferments and pleaſures of the world, no though it were to raign ouer the trees.

Beneuolo Iuſtina præcepit vt adueſus fidē patrum imperialia decreta diſſereret; Illo vero ſe impia verba prolaturum abnuente, celſiorem honoris gradū

It was an excellent reſolution of *Beneuolus* in his anſwer to *Iuſtina* the Arrian Empreſſe, profering preferments to him to haue beene inſtrumentall in a ſeruice which could not bee done with a good Conſcience. *What doe ye promiſing me an higher degree of preferment for a reward of impiety? yea euen take this from me which already I haue, ſo that I may keep a good conſcience.* And

ſo

ſo forthwith he threw at his feet his girdle, the enſigne of his honour. Thus doth a good Conſcience throw and trample honour and preferment vnder foot, to maintaine its owne integritie? Thus can nothing corrupt a good conſcience. *I haue beene young, and now am old, and yet neuer ſaw I the righteous forſaken*, to wit, of God, *Pſalm.* 37. *Dauid* out of his experience could haue ſaid as much in this point, I haue bin yong and now am old, yet neuer ſaw I God, and godlineſſe forſaken by the righteous, by the man that had a good conſcience. But the man that had a good Conſcience when hee was young, will hold out & haue it when he is old. It is the great honour and grace of a good Conſcience which *Walden* thinkes he ſpake to the diſgrace of *Wickliffe*, *Ita vt tanoplaceret, quod iuueni complacebat*, He was young and old, one and the ſame man. Old age decayes the body, the ſtrength, the ſenſes, but conſcience it touches not; that holds out ſound to death. As of Chriſt in another ſenſe,

ſpopondit, ſi mandata perficeret: cui Berenolus, Quid mihi pro impietatis mercede altiorem promittis gradum? hunc ipſum quem habeo auferte, dum integram fidei cõſcientiam tueor. Ac protenus cingulum ante pedes eius abiecit, Sigon de occid. Imp. l. 1. pag. 200.

Fox Acts and mon.

Heb. 13. ſo may it be ſaid of a good cõſcience in this, *Yeſterday, and to day, and the ſame for euer.* A good conſcience is no changeling, but let a mans eſtate change from rich to poore, from poor to rich, or let the times change from good to euill, or from euill to worſe; or a mans dayes change from young to old, let his haires and head change, yet among all theſe changes a good Conſcience will not change, but hold it owne vntill its laſt day.

Now put mens Conſciences vpon this triall, and their inconſtancy either in good cauſes, or courſes, wil diſcouer their naughtines. In a good cauſe how many are like *Darius?* His conſcience ſtruggles a great while for *Daniel*, hee knew he was innocent, he knowes the action to bee vniuſt, and therefore labours all day till the ſetting of the Sun for his deliuerance, *Dan.* 6. 14. but yet ouercome with the Preſidents and Princes vrgency, *ver.* 16. he commands him to the Lyons Denne. Here was a naturall Conſcience ſtanding for equi-

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tie and iuſtice, but yet no good conſcience, it holds but till Sunne ſet, and his Conſcience went downe with the Sunne. His Conſcience yeelds and is ouercome, though it know the act to be vniuſt.

Pilats Conſcience makes him plead for Chriſt. In his conſcience he acquits him, & thrice ſolemnly profeſſes that hee findes no fault in him, and therefore cannot in conſcience condemne him, yea withall ſeekes to releaſe him, *Iohn* 19. 12. Is not here now a good Conſcience? Indeed it had been ſo in this particular fact, if his Conſcience had beene inflexible, and had held out. But when *Pilate* heares them ſay, that if hee be his friend, hee is no friend to *Cæſar*, *Iohn* 19. 12. and whileſt withall he is willing to content the people, *Marke* 15. 15. Now that there is feare on the one ſide, and deſire to curry fauour on the other, where now is his conſcience? Now hee preſently deliuers him to bee crucified, though hee knowes in his Conſcience that

there is no fault in him. What a good Conſcience hath many a Iudge, and Lawyer? How ſtiffely will they ſtand in, and proſecute a iuſt caſe, till a bribe come & puts out the very eyes of their Conſcience. Their Conſciences are of ſo ſoft a temper, that the leaſt touch of ſiluer turnes their edge preſently. They hold out well till there come a tentation on their left hand, that is, in their right hand. *Pſal.* 144. 8. *Whoſe mouth ſpeakes vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falſhood.* If once the right hand be a right hand of falſhood, the mouth will ſoone ſpeake vanity, though before it ſpeake Conſcience. Who would not haue thought *Balaam* to haue beene a man of an excellent Conſcience? *If Balak would giue me his houſe full of ſiluer and gold, I cannot goe beyond the word of the Lord my God, to doe leſſe or more, Num.* 22. 18. But yet beſides that faltring in thoſe words *I cannot goe*, whereas the language of good conſcience would haue beene, *I will not goe*; beſides that I ſay,

before he ends his ſpeech, ſee how the hope of promotions works, and works his Conſcience like waxe before the fire, *verſe 19. Now therefore I pray you, tarry here alſo this night, that I may know what the Lord will ſay vnto mee more.* A faltring inference: If his Conſcience had beene good, it would haue inferred ſtrongly thus; Now therefore I pray get you gone, and trouble me no longer. He knew in his Conſcience the people ought not to bee curſed, and that hee ought not to goe, and yet comes in with *I pray tarry all night, &c.* Truly *Balak* needed not to haue beene ſo lauiſh and ſo prodigall, as to offer an houſe full, one handfull of his Siluer and Gold will frame *Balaams* Conſcience to any thing.

The like tryall may be made of mens Conſciences, by their *inconſtancy* in good courſes, and this will condemne three ſorts, as guilty of euill Conſciences.

1. Such as ſomet imes being conuin-

ced of the neceſſity of good courſes, do ſet vpon the practiſe of them, & begin to looke to wards Religiõ, & religious duties; till meeting with ſome of their ſuppoſed wiſer neighbours, they be aduiſed to take heed, they may bring thẽſelues into greater note then they are aware of, they wil incurre ſharper cenſures then they thinke of, &c. and ſo ſuddenly all is daſht, all is quaſht and quencht. There is a diſeaſe among beaſts they call the *Staggers*, and it is a diſeaſe too frequent in mens Conſciences; who ſometimes are on, ſometimes off, one day begin, and next day ceaſe good courſes. That may be ſaid of many mens conſciences, which *Iacob* ſpeakes of *Reuben*, *Gen.*49.4. *Vnſtable as water*. The water moues as the windes blow. If the wind blow out of the Eaſt, then it moues one way; if out of the weſt, then it moues another, the cleane contrary, and vpon euery new winde a new way. So many, let them heare a conuincing, & a good perſwading Sermon mouing to good duties, ther

then they will ſet vpon them; let them againe heare either ſome mocks, or reproaches for thoſe wayes, or ſome ſage aduiſe frō one they count wiſe, againſt the way of conſcience; they are as far off againe as euer. Theſe ſtaggering, irreſolute, and watry Conſciences are farre from good ones.

2. Such as in their youth, or when the world was low with them, were very zealous and forward; But what are they now at this day? True downeright *Demaſſes*, zealous whē they were young, but now old and cold: zealous when they were meane, but now the world is come vpon them, *Demas*-like they haue forſaken goodneſſe, and embraced the world, haue gotten now worme-eaten, and world-eaten Conſciences. The zeale of Gods houſe was wont to eate them vp, but now the world hath eaten vp them, and all their good Conſcience.

3. Thoſe that haue made good the profane Prouerb, *Young Saints and old Deuils*, whoſe hatred of Religion and good

good conſcience is greater then euer was; their loue thereto, as *Amnons* was towards *Thamar*, 2. *Sam.*13. 15. They were zealous and forward frequenters of Gods houſe and Ordinances; zealous enemies againſt Swearing, and Sabbath-breaking, &c. But what are they at this day? Yeſterday indeed zealous profeſſors of holineſſe, but what are they to day? To day malicious ſcoffers of godlineſſe, haters and oppoſers of goodnes, the onely ſwearers & drunkards in a Country. What kind of Conſciences haue theſe? None of *Pauls* Conſcience, *I haue liued in all good Conſcience vntill this day*. What then? Iuſt the conſciences of *Hymenæus* and *Alexander*, 1. *Tim.*1. 18. 19. They once made great profeſſion of Conſcience, but now enemies to *Paul*, and blaſphemers, men, as *Paul* ſpeaks, that had put *away good conſcience*, they did not through want of watchfulnes let it *ſlip*, or *ſteale away*; but as if it would neuer haue bin gone ſoone enough, they *put* and *draue it away*, ἣν ἀπωσάμενοι, *Be*

za tranſlates it, *Qua expulſa.* They vſed their Conſciences as *Amnon* did *Thamar* after his luſt ſatisfied, 2. *Sam.* 13.15, 17. *Ariſe, be gone*, ſayes hee to her, and when ſhe pleads for her ſelfe, he cals his ſeruant, and ſayes vnto him, *Put out this woman, and bolt the doore after her*, put her out ſo, as ſhee may bee ſure not to come againe. They dealt with their Conſciences as Colledges deale with Rake-hels, expelled them without all hope of re-entry. Thus many profane Apoſtatizing back-ſliders cannot be content to loſe good conſcience, vnleſſe *Amnon*-like they may put it away with violence, & expel it. And how can they haue good Conſcience that haue put it away? He hath not his wife, that hath put her away, & giuen her a bill of diuorce. In the dayes of Popery and darkneſs, the Deuill it ſeemed walked very familiarly amongſt them, and hence we haue ſo many ſtories of fayries, & of children taken out of Cradles, and others layd in their roomes, whom they called *changelings*.

Since

Since the light of the Goſpell theſe Diuels and Fairies haue not been ſeen amongſt vs, but yet wee are ſtill troubled with *changelings*. Some, Prieſts, and Ieſuites haue changed; ſome, the world hath changed; ſome, goodfellowſhip and the Ale-houſe hath changed. Theſe haue plaid the fayries, haue taken and ſtolne away goodly, forward and feruent Chriſtians, and haue layd in their roomes Earthlings, Worldlings, Popelings, Swearers, Drunkards, malicious ſcorners of all goodneſſe. Thus haue theſe fayries in ſtead of faire and comely children, brought in theſe lame, blinde, deformed and wrizzled faced *changelings*, that any one may eaſily ſee them to be rather the births of ſome hobgoblins, then the Children of God. If therefore wee would euidence our Conſciences good, labour to hold to the laſt, and reſt not in youth, but labour to haue age found in the way of righteouſneſſe. This is a Crowne of glory, and this is right good Conſci-

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ence to liue therein vntill our dying day. All the former ſixe are nothing without this laſt.

Chap. X.

The comfort and benefit of a good Conſcience, in the caſe of Diſgrace, and Reproach.

WEe are now come to the fift and laſt point which was propounded: The *Motiues* to perſwade vs to get good Conſciences. The *Motiues* thereunto may be many, I will keepe my ſelfe within the compaſſe of fiue.

1. *Motiue.* The incomparable and vnſpeakeable comfort, and benefit thereof in ſuch caſes and times as all other comforts faile a man, & wherein a man ſtands moſt in neede of comfort. Theſe caſes or times are fiue.

1. Motiue to a good cõſcience.

1. The

1. The Time and Caſe of *Diſgrace* and *Reproach.*
2. The Time of *Common feare*, and *Common Calamity.*
3. The Time of *Sickneſſe*, or outward croſſes in a mans goods.
4. The Time of *Death.*
5. The Time & *Day of Iudgement.*

In all theſe, or in any of theſe times it is good to haue ſuch a friend or companion that will ſticke to a man, and bee faithfull to him when all other things faile him. Such a friend, & ſuch a companion, is a good Conſcience. *A friend loues at all times, and a brother is borne for aduerſitie, Prou.* 17.17. But in ſome of theſe caſes a brother and a friend may bee falſe and will not, or may be weake and cannot helpe nor pleaſure a man, but a good Conſcience is better then all friends and brethren whatſoeuer; when they will not, or cannot, or may not, yet then will a good Conſcience ſtick cloſe to a man, and bee a ſure friend to him. Let vs ſee in the particulars the truth of it

Interim elige ſocium qui cum omnia ſubtracta fuerint fidem ſeruat dilectoribus ſuis nec recedit in tempore anguſtiæ. Bern. de Conſc.

1. In

1. In the time and caſe of *Diſgrace, Infamy, Reproach*, and wrongs of that kinde, the comfort and benefit of a good Conſcience is vnſpeakable. When a man ſhall be traduced, ſlandered, falſly accuſed and condemned, then in ſuch wrongs will a good Conſcience doe the office of a faithfull friend, will ſtick to, & ſtand by a man, and will comfort and hearten him againſt all ſuch iniuries. *Paul* is here conuented before the Councell as a malefactor, he hath an whole Councel bent againſt him. What now is his comfort, and his defence againſt ſuch an heape of accuſers as doe affront him? This it is, *Men and brethren, I haue liued in all good Conſcience*. As if he had ſaid, Impeach, traduce, accuſe and condemne me as you pleaſe, yet be it knowne vnto you, that I haue a good conſcience, and this my good Conſcience is it which ſhall comfort and vphold me againſt all your iniurious and vnequall proceedings. You may bring forth falſe witneſſes againſt mee, but my Con-

The comfort of a good Conſcience in caſe of diſgrace and reproach.

Conſcience doth, and will witnes for me, you may condemne me, yet my Conſcience acquits, and abſolues me. And thus doth *Paul* ſhelter himſelfe vnder his good conſcience.

The like wee may ſee in the next Chapter. *Ananias* and the Elders come and bring *Tertullus*, & he is feed to be *Pauls* accuſer, and he layes heauy and hainous thing, to *Pauls* charge, *verſ.* 5. *We haue found this man a peſtilent fellow and a mouer of ſedition among all the Ieues throught the world, a ring leader of the ſect of the Nazarens, &c.* Here be foule things, what will *Paul* be able to ſay to all this? Will notthis be enough to ſinke him downe vtterly, to ſee ſo many banded together, and ſuch great ones combined to countenance ſuch an accuſation? How will he be able to ſubſiſt? Now then behold the benefit, and comfort of a good Conſcience. Hee holds vp his former buckler, and ſmites *Ananias*, and the reſt with his former weapon, *verſ.* 16. *Herein doe I exerciſe my ſelfe, to haue alwaies a Conſcience*

ence void of offence towards God, and towards men. *Ananias* and the Elders haue a mercenary *Tertullus* to accuſe him, *Paul* hath no man dares bee ſeene to plead for him, none will be retained in his cauſe, but yet now Conſcience ſteps out, & ſtops the foule mouth of this ſlanderous Oratour, and puts ſpirit, and heart into *Paul* to plead his owne Cauſe againſt them all. Conſcience ſeems on this manner to animate him; Feare not *Paul* the accuſations of this *Tertullus*, I witneſſe for thee thine Innocency. I iuſtifie it to the teeth of *Tertullus*, that he is one whoſe malice and couetouſneſſe hath made him ſet his Conſcience to ſale; ſtand vp therefore, and ſpeake boldly for thy ſelfe, dread them not. Wel fare a good conſcience yet, that wil ſpeake comfort to *Paul*, and make *Paul* ſpeake with courage, when none elſe dare bee ſeene in his cauſe.

It was an ill caſe *Dauid* was in, *Pſal.* 69. 20, 21. *Reproach hath broken mine heart, and I am full of heauineſſe, and I*

looked for ſome to take pitie, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none: they gaue me alſo gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they gaue mee vineger to drinke. A very hard caſe indeed. Where was now *Dauids* familiar freind, his acquaintance with whom hee was wont to take ſweet counſell, what was become of him now? Poſſibly ſome of his acquaintance were at this time like a broken tooth, & a foot out of ioynt, *Pro.* 25. 19. *Confidence in an vnfaithfull man is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of ioynt.* Others it may be that had profeſt him loue, were ready to faſten a poyſoned tooth in him. This was *Dauids* caſe, and this may be any mans caſe; but now at ſuch a time, and in ſuch a pinch appeares the excellency and benefit of a good Conſcience. Though all a mans friends ſhould proue *Iobs* friends, like the Winter-brooks of *Teman*, that in winter ouerſwell the bankes, but in the ſcorching heat of Sōmer proue drie ditches, yet then, euen then well fare a good conſcience

ence. That will heale *Dauids* heart broken with reproach, that will cheere him vp in his heauineſs, that will ſweeten the gall, & take away the ſharpnes of the vineger, which his enemies haue giuen him to drinke.

There is a generation, Pro. 30. 14. *whoſe teeth are as ſwords, and their iaw teeth as kniues*; and *Pro.* 12. 18. that generation *ſpeakes as the piercing of a ſword.* There is a generation, whoſe *words are wounds that goe downe into the innermoſt parts of the belly.* Pro. 18. 8. Theſe be dangerous generations. But what generation are they? *Generations of Vipers.* Pſal. 140. 3. *Adders poyſon is vnder their lips. Iunius* tranſlates it, *Venenum ptyados*, The poiſon of the *ſpitting Serpent.* They bee then generations of ſpitting ſerpents, euen of fiery ſerpents, that haue their tongues ſet on fire from hell, & ſo they ſpit fiery poyſon in the faces of Innocents. Now there is no man can liue in this world, at whom theſe adders will not ſpit, no man can be free from the ſprinkling of their poyſon. The diſci-

ple is not aboue the master; If these snakes haue hissed at the Lord of the house; and if these spitting Serpents haue cast their poison in his face, why would they feare to doe it to the seruants? But is there then no balme against this poyson? No buck ler against these swords? Yes, there is the soueraign balme, & the impenetrable buckler of a good cõscience. It is a balsome that will allay the poyson of these Adders, that it shall neuer burst a mans heart, or if these swords pierce the very innermost bowels, yet this will so salue these wounds, that they shall not rancle, nor become mortal. Oh! how mortall is this adders poison, how fatal are these swords, how keene their edge, & how full of paine their wounds, where inward guilt giues strēgth vnto them? But integrity and goodnesse of Conscience, is a pretious balme of *Gilead*, that takes away the venome of this poyson, and the stinging smart of the wounds of these swords.

Let *Paul* liue with euer soo good a cor-

conscience before God, and man, *Act.* 24.16. yet *Tertullus* will play the spitting adder, and hee will spit, yea, spue forth his poyson in his face, and in the face of an whole Court will not spare openly to slander him for an arrant varlet, a lewd, pestilent, & a villanous fellow. Such drivell will the malicious world spit in the face of Godlines. But marke now the benefit, & comfort of a good conscience. Either a good Conscience with *Stephens* Angelicall face wil dazle, & shame the diuels oratours, 1. *Pet.* 3.16. *Hauing a good Conscience that they may be ashamed*, or els like *Paul* it can shake off those vipers without swelling or falling downe dead. Yea, if Satans oratours, wil needs be opening their mouths against *Paul*; yet so good is his Conscience, that as *Iohn Hus* appealed from Pope *Alexander* to Pope *Alexander*, namely, from him in his anger to him in his cold blood, & better aduised, so dares *Paul* appeale from *Tertullus* to *Tertullus*, *Dauid* from *Shimei* to *Shimei*, frō enemies to enemies,

from their tongues to their hearts, from their mouthes to their Consciences, as knowing their owne integritie to bee such, as that their enemies owne hearts giue their tongues the lye, and tels them that against their consciences possessed with meere malice they are hurried on in Satans seruice. *Tertullus* knowes he lyes, and his owne Conscience tells him he lyes in his throate, that *Paul* is an honester man then himselfe, yea, and the comfort is, that *Pauls* Conscience comforts him, and assures him that *Tertullus* his Conscience assures him all this, So vnspeakeably sweet is the comfort of a good Conscience.

Dauid complaines of a great affliction. *Psal.* 35. 11. *False witnesse did rise vp, they layd to my charge things that I knew not.* What should a man doe in such a case, if hee had not the comfort of a good Conscience witnessing for him? But now at such a pinch appeares the benefit of a good Conscience; Let euer so many rise vp falsely to witnesse

neſſe againſt him, yet his conſcience will witneſſe as faſt for him. *My friends ſcorne mee*, ſayes *Iob*, *Iob* 16. 20. They witneſſed againſt him to bee a wicked perſon, and an hypocrite, they cenſured and condemned him, but what was *Iobs* comfort? That ſame, *verſe* 19. *Behold my witneſſe is in heauen, and my record is on high.* That was one comfort, but that was not all, he had alſo a witneſſe on earth, and his record below. Vpon whoſe record, and witneſſe, ſee with what ſolemnitie and with what confidence he ſtands, *Iob* 27. 2, 6. *As God liueth who hath taken away my iudgement, and the Almightie who hath vexed my ſoule, All the while my breath is in mee, and the Spirit of God is in my noſtrils, my lips ſhall not ſpeake wickedneſſe, nor my tongue vtter deceit; God forbid that I ſhould iuſtifie you, till I dye I will not remoue mine integrity from me, my righteouſneſſe I will hold faſt, and will not let it goe, mine heart ſhall not reproach mee ſo long as I liue.* As if he had ſaid, As the Lord liues,

whileſt there is breath in my bodie, I will not yeeld vnto your accuſations, nor yet acknowledge my ſelfe guiltie of that you do charge me withal. Vrge me and preſſe mee what you will, yet will I neuer let goe mine hold. Why what is it that makes *Iob* thus ſtiffe, & reſolute, what is it that ſupports him with ſuch an excellent ſpirit? that *v. 6. Mine heart ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I liue.* Indeed you reproach, cenſure, & condemne me, you lay heauy things to my charge; But I haue ſearched the records of my conſcience, I haue called that vnpartiall witnes to teſtifie the truth, and I find conſcience witneſſing ſtrongly on my ſide, and therefore doe what you can, you ſhall neuer beare me downe. *Iobs* friends may proue fickle, and falſe, but his owne Conſcience will proue true to him, that will plead for him, animate him, and comfort him againſt all their calumnious and iniurious reproaches, and giue him cauſe of much ioy and triumph. *Iob* then had his witneſſe in heauen, & *Iob* had

Nam ſi in his in quibus me criminantur, teſtimonium Conſcientiæ meæ nō ſtat c ntra me in cōſpectuDei, quo nullus oculus mortalis intenditur, non ſolum contriſtari non debeo, verū etiam exultare & gaudere, quia merces mea multa eſt in cælis. Neq; enim intuendum eſt quam ſit amarum, ſed quam falſum ſit quod audio, & quam verax pro cuius nomine hoc audio. Aug. contra lit. Pet l. 1. 3.

had his witneſſe on earth, God and his own conſcience, two witneſſes beyond all exception; and in the *mouth of two witneſſes euery truth ſhall ſtand.* Conſcience is a thouſand witneſſes, and God is aboue Conſcience. And what Conſcience witneſſe concerning matter of fact, God himſelfe will iuſtifie the ſame. He that hath a good conſcience, hath a ſure friend, that will neither ſlinke nor ſhrinke at any hand. Nay he hath two good friends, and two ſubſtantiall witneſſes, whoſe teſtimonies, though ſecret, yet are ſuch as ſweetly ſolace the heart of man againſt open reproaches, ſlanders, falſe witneſſes, & all wrongs and iniuries of that kinde whatſoeuer. The teſtimony of Conſcience is full of comfort, becauſe of the vndoubted certaintie, and the vnqueſtioned infallibility thereof, ſo that it voycing on a mans ſide, ſtrangely cheares his heart, *Pro.* 27. 19. *As in water face anſwers to face, ſo doth the heart of a man vnto man;* That is, as ſome expound it, As a man may ſee his face

face by looking in the water, ſo a man may ſee himſelfe, and what hee is by looking into his Conſcience. If a man ſhould be told that hee had ſome filth or bloach on his face, if he would goe look into the water, or eſpecially into a looking-glaſſe, hee ſhould eaſily ſee whether it were ſo or no. And if looking into the water, or glaſſe, he could not ſee any ſuch filth in his face, though an hundred ſhould offer to beare him downe to the contrary, yet would hee beleeue his own eyes before them all. So here, whē at any time foule mouths are open, and ſpare not to caſt aſperſions vpon innocency, and to lay ſcandalous things to a mans charge, then a man by looking into his Conſcience can ſee himſelfe, and can finde whether he be guilty or not, & ſeeing himſelfe in that water, or in that glaſſe to be cleare from that dirt & filth which malice would caſt in his face, it ſo fils his heart with comfort, and confidence, as makes him treade all reproach, and falſe iudgement of man

In ſpeculo Conſcientiæ ſtatus interioris homi-nis & exterioris cognoſcitur. Non immerito Cōſcientiam ſpeculo cōparauit, quoniam in ea tanquā ſpeculo rationis oculus tam indecens quam quod decens in ſe eſt, claro aſpectu apprehendere poteſt. Ber. de Conſc.

vnder

vnder his foot.

This appeares by the contrary. Let a man bee praiſed, and magnified euer ſo, let euer ſo much good be ſpoken of him, and euer ſo much worth be attributed to him, yet if his owne heart tell him, that all is falſely ſpoken of him, and there is indeed no ſuch matter in him, he hath at all no true comfort in all the good words of the world. *Pro. 27, 21. As the fining pot for ſiluer, the furnace for gold, ſo is a man to his praiſe,* that is, a man is to trie his praiſe that is giuen him, & if his conſcience tell him it is vndeſerued, hee is to ſeparate this droſſe of flattery frō himſelfe. All the commendations, and admirations of the world what cōfort can they yeeld, whileſt a mans Conſcience tells him, that they are all but lying and glauering flatteries; what though the poore multitude feeling the ſwet, and refreſhment of a Phariſees almes, do canonize a Phariſe for a Saint, yet what is he the better, or what cōfort hath he the more, whilſt his own conſcience reproaches

Non ideo bona eſt conſcientia mea quia vos illā laudatis. Quid enim laudatis quod non videtis? Aug. de ver. dom. ſer. 49. Si autem nō aurē ſolam perſtitit incundā criminantis, verū etiam cōſcientiam mordet veritas criminis, quid mihi prodeſt ſi me comminus laudibus totus mundus attollat. Ita nec malam cōſcientiam ſanat preconium laudantis, nec bonam vulnerat cōuicianris op-

proaches, and reproues him, and tells him that he is a vaine-glorious hypocrite, and that though theſe whom he feedes, ſend him to heauen, yet he ſhall haue his portion with hypocrites, and vnbeleeuers. What is a man the better for a flattering Funerall Commendation, whilſt in the meane time hee is vnder the reproach, and torture of his cõſcience, in the place of torment? How many a mã is there that hath the good word of all men, no man but ſpeakes well of him, but yet in the meane time, his own heart giues him betrer words, and rates him to his face? How well contented would ſuch a one bee, and what an happy exchange would hee hold it, to haue all the world raile on him, & ſlander him, ſo his own conſcience would but ſpeak friendly & kindly to him? So he could find hony from his Conſcience, hee would not care what gall he had from the world.

Experience lets vs ſee that ſuch as haue bin malevolent and iniurious againſt others innocency, though they haue

probrium. Aug. contra lit. Petil. l. 2 In omni quod dicitur ſemper tacite occurrere debemus ad mentem & interiorem teſtem, & iudicem requirere. Quid enim prodeſt ſi omnes laudant & cõſcientia accuſat? aut poterit obeſſe ſi omnes derogent, & ſola Conſcientia defendit? Greg. ſup. 125. hom. 6.

haue bin abetted & born out by their vmpires, and aduocates, that for handfulls of barly, and ſcraps, and cruſts, haue laboured to maintaine ill cauſes, and worſe perſons, yet they haue had no peace nor reſt of heart. Their aduocates haue bid them, ſit downe with reſt and victory, the day is theirs, they haue cheered them, and ſtriuen to deſerue their fee, and yet their guilty clients being netled with the inward guilt of their Conſciences, haue ſtill bin haunted with a reſtles & perplexed vnquiet ſpirit, which others, made guilty, and cenſured for offenders by ſuch mercenary vmpires, haue poſſeſſed their ſoules in patience, and haue bin cheerfull and merry-hearted, from the comfort of their owne innocent and cleere Conſciences.

So that looke as the naughty Conſcience can ſpeake no comfort, though all the world ſpeake well of it; ſo contrarily, though all the world reproach, cenſure, ſlander, &c. yet a good Conſcience can, and will ſpeake peace, and com-

comfort to a mans heart

The *Corinthiãs* did exceedingly ſlight *Paul*, He was this, and he was that, but how was he affected with it? See how, 1. *Cor.* 4. 3. 4. *But with me it is a very ſmall thing, that I ſhould bee iudged of you.* I know full well what your cenſures are, & what ſentẽce you paſſe vpon me, but know ye that I no whit at al regard the ſame, I make no reckoning therof at al. Why? might the *Corinthians* ſay, do ye count vs ſo ſilly, & ſo iniudicious? Nay, ſayes *Paul*, I ſpeak it not as if you were fillier then others, with me it is a ſmall things to be iudged of you, or of mans iudgement, let them be the moſt wiſe, & iudicious that are in the world, or of *mans Day*, though by men conuened in ſolemne maner for iudgement; I paſſe not what their cenſure is, I regard not their miſ-iudgings of me. I, but what makes *Paul* thus ſlight mens iudgement of him? That in the fourth verſe, *I know nothing by my ſelfe*, mine owne Conſcience iudges me not, nor ſentences me, that layes no ſuch thing to my charge,

Fœlix conſcientiæ non ſibi in aliquo conſcia, quæ non proprium iudicium nec alienum veretur. Bern. de Conſci. Beata plane quæ non alienis æſtimatur iudiciis, ſed domeſticis percipitur ſenſibus tanquam ſui iudex. Neq; enim populares opiniones pro mercede aliqua requirit, neque pro ſupplicio p uet. Ambroſ. de offi. l. 2 c. 1. Non poſſunt aliena verba crimen affigere quod propria non

charge, and therefore ſo longs as my Conſcience is on my ſide, I regard not a whit what the world iudges.

recepit conſcientia. Ambr. in Pſal. 38.

Now then ſee what a motiue this is to get and keepe a good Conſcience. As wee would be glad to haue comfort and confidence againſt the malice of opprobrious tongues, as wee would haue a counter-poyſon againſt their venome, ſo get a good Conſcience. Here is that which may make vs in loue with a good cõſcience. Reproach muſt full often be the portion of Gods deare children. *Iſraelites* ſhall bee for euer an abomination to *Egyptians*. And though the *Egyptian* dogges moued not their tongues againſt *Iſrael*, *Exodus* 11. 7. yet dogged *Egyptians* will moue their tongues and their teeth too. The Apoſtles muſt be counted the *filth of the world, and the off-ſcowrings of all things*, 1. *Cor.* 4. 13. The Lord Ieſus himſelfe dranke of this cup, *Pſal.* 22 6, 7. *I am a worme and no man, a reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people. All they that ſee me, laugh me to ſcorne,*

ſcorne, &c. The way to heauen is a narrow way, and this narrow way is beſet with ſnakes, ſpitting adders, barking, and bitting, and mad dogs, and a man muſt paſſe to heauen *through good and euill report*, 2. *Cor.* 6. 8.

Currentem attritet ſuper aſpidas & baſiliſcos declinare ſenem vipera non poterit. Proſp. de Aug. *Cõſcia mens recti fame mendacia videt, Sed nos in vitium credula turba ſumus.* Ouid.

Well then, it being ſo hard a paſſage how may a man get himſelfe ſo armed that he may paſſe cheerefully through all theſe? get a good conſcience, and thou ſhalt regard theſe ſnakes, ſerpẽts, vipers, and dogs, no more then a ſtraw vnder thy foot. If thou haue a good conſcience, thou ſhalt *laugh* at the reproaches of enemies, as *Eliphaz* ſpeaks of deſtruction *Iob* 5. A good Conſcience will ſay vnto thee, Goe on cheerily in the waies of GOD, what euer diſcouragements the Deuill raiſes by reproaches and ſlanders, feare them not, behold I acquit and excuſe thee, I will beare thee out, I will witneſſe at Gods tribunal for thee. Lo, I giue thee balme againſt their poiſon, a buckler againſt their ſwords. Let them curſe, yet I will bleſſe thee; let them reproach, yet

yet I will comfort; let them condemn, yet I will abſolue thee; let them defame thee, yet I will bee thy compurgator; let them caſt dirt in thy face, yet I will waſh it off; let them diſquiet, yet behold, I am ready to cheere thee. Oh the ſweet and vnconceiuable comfort that a good Conſcience will ſpeake, euen in the middeſt of *the cruell ſpeakings of vngodly men*, *Iude* 15. that will ſpeake comfortably when they ſpeake cruelly, and moſt comfortably, when they ſpeake moſt cruelly. Such is the benefit of a good Conſcience in caſe of reproach and diſgrace.

CHAP. IX.

The comfort and benefit of a good Conſcience in the times of common feares and calamities, in the times of perſonall euils, as ſickneſſe, and afflictions, for Conſcience ſake.

IN the ſecond place, let vs ſee what the benefit and comfort of a good

2. The comfort of a good conſcience in the times of cõmon feares and calamities.

Conſcience is, in the times of *Common feares*, & *Common calamities*. When the world is full of feares and dangers, and calamities breake in, how fares it then with an euill cõſcience, in what taking are they that want a good conſcience? They are abſorpt with feares, and the very tidings puts them to ſuch perplexities, *Iſa.7.2. Ahas* is told of a confederacy between *Syria*, & *Ephraim*, & ſee in what feares hee and his people were, *His hear was moued, & thet heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moued with the wind.* So deeply doe reports and euill tidings affect them, the trees in thewood are not ſo ſhakē with the bluſtering windes, as euill conſciences are with euill tidings. When ill newes, and ill conſciences meet, there is no ſmall feare. The ſignes that prognoſticate ſorrowfull times, ſee how deeply they affect euill Conſciences, *Luke 21.25. There ſhal be ſignes in the ſun and the moone, and in the ſtars, and vpon the earth*, diſtreſſe *of Nations with* perplexity, *mens hearts* failing *them* for feare,

feare, *and for looking after thoſe things which are* comming *in the eart.* But when calamity indeed comes, & not ill newes, but ill times, and ill conſciences meet, how are they then? They are then either in the caſe the Ægyptians were in the famine, *Geneſ.* 47. 13. *They were at their wits end*; or as thoſe in a ſtorme at Sea, *Pſ.* 107. 26, 27. *Their ſoule is melted becauſe of trouble, They reele to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man, and all their wiſedome is ſwallowed vp.* Exceſſe of feare puts them into as great diſtempers, as exceſſe of wine, it vtterly ſtupifies them, and they by feare, are as much bereft of the vſe of their ſenſes, wit, & wiſedom, as a drunkard is in his drunkeneſſe. Yea, their feares make them not onely drunk, but ſtarke madde, *Deut.* 28. 34. *Thou ſhalt be oppreſſed and curſed alway, ſo that thou ſhalt bee madde for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee.* The perplexities of an euill conſcience in euill times, are vnſpeakeably grieuous. *Iſay* doth exceeding liuely deſcribe them, *Iſay* 31.

7, 8. 9. *Therefore ſhall all hands be faint, and euery mans heart ſhall melt, And they ſhall bee afraid, pangs and ſorrowes ſhall take hold of them, they ſhall be in pain as a woman that trauells, they ſhall be amaze done at another, their faces ſhall bee as flames, &c.* Hence that ſame ſtrange queſtion of the Prophets, *Ierem.* 30. 6. *Aske ye now, and ſee whether a man doth trauell with childe?* A ſtrange queſtion, what ſhould make the Prophet ask it? Becauſe he foreſaw ſuch ſtrange behauiour amongſt them, carrying themſelues in the ſame faſhion in the day of calamitie, that women vſe to do in the extremity of the pangs of child birth. *Wherefore doe I ſee euery man with his hands on his loynes as a woman in trauell, and all faces are turned into paleneſſe? Alas, for that day is great, ſo that none is like it, it is euen the time of Iacobs trouble.* When ſuch wofull dayes befall a man, all his riches will not yeeld him a iot of comfort, *Pro.* 11. 4. *Riches auaile not in the day of wrath.* No, that will no whit cheere a man at ſuch a time, *They ſhall*

ſhall caſt their ſiluer in the ſtreets, and their gold ſhall be removed, &c. Ezeck.7. 19. This ſhall be the miſerable pickle a man ſhall bee in at ſuch a time, that wants a good Conſcience.

But now looke vpon a man with a good Conſcience in ſuch times, and how fares it with him? Let euil tydings & times come, how is he affected therwithall? *He will not be affraid of euill tydings, for his heart is fixed, Pſal.* 112.7. feare he may, but yet his Heart ſhal be free from thoſe reſtleſſe, & perplexing diſtractions, wherewith all others are vexed, *Luke* 22.9. *When ye ſhall heare of warres and commotions, be not terrified.* And *Prou.*3.25. *Bee not afraid of ſudden feare.* There is nothing ſo armes & reſolues the heart againſt feares and euill tydings, as doth the peace and integrity of a good Conſcience. For let there be outward peace abroad in the world, and freedome from all feares of wars and combuſtions, yet little ioy & comfort can a man haue therin, whileſt his conſcience proclaimes warre againſt

him, and as Gods Herald ſummons him to battel. Thoſe inward warres, and rumours of wars, wofully diſtract him in the midſt of his outward peace. So contrarily let there bee peace within in the Conſcience, and all wars, and feares of warres huſht there, and then what euer feares and troubles are like to bee without, yet there will bee a calme, a ſerenity, and a ſweet ſecuritie within.

Be carefull, and ſo fearefull, *for nothing*, *Phil.4.6.* To bee fearefull in nothing, is indeed an excellent happineſſe of a well compoſed mind. How might one attain thereto? How might a man bring his heart to that fixed and ſtabliſht temper? See *ver.7. The peace of God that paſſes all vnderſtanding ſhall* guarde *your hearts and mindes*, φρουρησει, ſhall keepe with a guard, as Kings haue their guards about them, to ſaue their perſons from violence; ſhall guard your *hearts*, that is, your affections, that they run not into extremities of impatience, diſtraction, deſperation, when

when feares and terrors ſhall come, ye ſhall not be tranſported with ſuch diſtracting thoughts as ſhall depriue you of the freedome of your mindes, but that you ſhall haue them to attend vpon God in the greateſt of your dãgers. So that a man with a good conſcience in the middeſt of all feares and combuſtions can ſing with *Dauid*, *Pſ.* 116. 7. *Returne vnto thy reſt, O my ſoule.* The peace of a good conſcience is like the ballaſt of a ſhip. Let a ſhip goe to Sea without ballaſt in the bottome, and euery blaſt of winde is ready to ouerturne it, but being wel balaſted, though the winds blow ſtrong, yet it ſayles ſteddily and ſafely. Euery blaſt of ill newes, and tidings of feare, how full of terrible apprehenſions it fils an ill conſcience, it miſerably vnſettles and diſtracts it, whileſt a good conſcience, what blaſts ſoeuer blow, hath its hart ſteddy and at good command.

Me thinkes when I conſider *Noah* in his Cabbine, or neſt in the Ark, with what ſecurity and quiet of heart he ſits

here notwithſtanding the clattering of the raines vpon the Ark, the roaring of the waters, and the hideous howling and out-cryes of thoſe that were drownde in the flood, I ſee the Embleme of a good conſcience. *Tubalcain, Lamech, Iabal, Iubal*, with what horrid perplexities are their ſoules diſtraught. Some climbe vp this houſe top, ſome this high tree, others flee to ſome high mountaine, and there in what horror and amazement are they, whileſt one ſees his Children ſprawling, another his wife ſtrugling for life vpon the face of the mercileſſe waters, but eſpecially whileſt they behold the waters riſing by little and little, and purſuing them to the houſe tops, and threatning to ſweepe them off from the heads of the Mountaines, to which they had betaken themſelues. Theſe feares and amazements were worſe then an hundreth deaths. But now all this while how is it with *Noah*, he ſits dry in his cabbin, and literally was the ſaying of the Pſalme verified of him, *Surely in the*

the floods of great waters they came not nigh vnto him, Pſ.32.6. He hath his ark *pitcht within*, & *pitcht without*, neither can the raines from aboue beat in, nor the waters from beneath leake in, let all *fountaines of the great deepe bee braken vp, and the flood-gates of heauen bee opened*, yet not one drop of water comes at him, and though the waters preuaile fifteene Cubits aboue the high hils and mountaines, ſo that they bee couered, yet *Noah* hee is out of all feare, let them riſe as high as they will, yet ſhall hee keepe aboue them ſtill. Iuſt ſuch is the condition, and happineſſe of a man with a good Conſcience in ſad times. Whileſt the high hils, and mountaines are couered, the great and braue ſpirits of the world are ouerwhelmed with feare, are poſſeſt with dreadfull apprehenſions, ſo as they know not which way to look, nor which way to take, euen then a man with a good conſcience hath a ſtrange quiet of heart, is full of ſweet ſecurity and reſolution, & amids al the ſhrikes, how

howlings, and wringing of hands of earthly men, by patience poſſeſſes his ſoule, is maſter of himſelfe, and compoſes his ſoule to reſt. His Ark it pitcht within & without. The peace of God, and the peace of a good Conſcience, keeps the water-floods from comming into his ſoule. The raine and the waues they beate vpon the Arke, but yet they pierced it not. A man with a good cõſcience may fall into, & may be ſwept away with cõmon calamities: yet how euer it fare with his outward man, yet his ſoule is free from that horrour, and thoſe madding perplexities wherwith all wicked ones are ouertaken. The peace of a good Conſcience ſhall keep off theſe diſtracting feares from his minde. Though he cannot be free happely from the *common deſtructions*, yet ſhall he be free from the *common diſtractiõs* of the world. There be two things in common calamities, *The ſword without, & terror within, Deut.* 32.25. & the latter of the two, is the worſe by farre. Now here is the benefit of a good conſcience,

ſcienee, though it doe not ſaue alwaies from the *ſword without*, yet it deliuers alwayes from the *terror within*, which giues a terrible edge to the ſword, and which being remoued, the ſword is nothing ſo terrible. Whē the Canaanites were deſtroyed by Iſrael, there was a double ſorrow and ſmart vpon them. The *ſword* of the Iſraelite, and Gods *Hornet*, *Ioſhua* 24. 12. What was that *Hornet*? Nothing elſe but that diſtracting and perplexing feare and terror wherewith God filled their hearts, as appeares, *Exodus* 23.27, 28. There is no *Hornet* can ſo vexe with his ſting, as theſe terrors vexe euill conſciences in euill dayes. Now here is the priuiledge of good Conſciences, though they may ſmart with the ſword, yet the *Hornet* ſhall not ſting them, nor fil their hearts with that throbbing anguiſh, that theſe terrors in times of calamitie put euill Conſciences to.

A ſweet motiue to make any in loue with a good Conſcience. Whileſt we looke vpon the euils of the times, wee cannot

cannot but looke for euill times. Look we vpon our ſinnes, and Gods adminiſtration abroad; vpon the malice and policies of the aduerſaries of Gods grace, and what doe theſe but prognoſticate heauy things. Now ſuppoſe a flood ſhould come, would we not be glad of an Arke, & ſuch a cabbin therein as ſhould keepe out the waters from our ſoules? Get then the pitch of a good Conſcience, & thou ſhalt fit like *Noah*, if not free from the waters, yet free from the feares of *Lamech*, & *Tubalcain*, which are worſe then the waters. For the feares of ſuch euils are more bitter and vnſufferable then the euils thēſelues. Suppoſe, I ſay, a flood ſhould come, who would not giue a Kingdome for an Arke weil pitcht? Suppoſe calamitie ſhould come, who would not giue a world for a good Conſcience then? *Iabel*, *Gen.* 4. 20. he is buſie in building of tents, and he is among his flocks and cattell, and *Iubal*, *Gen.* 4. 21. he is wholly vpon his merry pins, as his Harpe and Organs; He and his

his take *the Timbrel, and the Harpe, and reioyce at the ſound of the Organ, Iob* 21. 12. And theſe iolly iouiall lads giue poore *Noah* many a drie flout, many a ſcornefull ſcoffe whileſt he is building his Arke, & aske what this brainſicke and mad fellow meanes to make ſuch a veſſell, whether hee meant to ſaile on the dry land, or to make a ſea when he had made his ſhip? I, but whē the flood is come, and the waters begin to bee chin deepe, then aske *Iabel* whether building of tents or building of an Ark be the wiſer worke, then whether is better *Noahs* Arke, or *Iubals* Pipes? Now that the flood is come, and theſe come perhaps wading middle deep to the Arke ſide, & bellow and howle to *Noah* to open the Arke to them: Now would not *Iabel* giue all his tents, and all his cattell, but to bee where *Noahs* dog lyes, would not *Iubal* now giue all his pipes and merriment, to haue but the place that an hogge had in the Arke. Now *Iubal* let vs heare one of your merry Songs, pipe now

and

and make your ſelfe merry with gybing at *Noahs* folly, in making a ſhip to ſayle on drie land. What ayleſt thou *Iubal* to howle and wring thine hands thus? where is thine Harp & Organs now? cheer vp thy ſoule now with theſe vanities. Now the flood is come, now *Noah* is in the Arke, now Sirs, you that are ſuch *men of renowne*, *Gen.6.4.* you that were the braue gallants of the earth, now tell me, who is the foole, and who is the wiſe man now?

How many in the dayes of peace make light of a good Conſcience, yea if they ſee others to bee but carefull in rigging of their Shippe, and pitching, and trimming vp ſuch an Arke, how ready are they to ſpend their byting ſcoffes, and their tart ieſts vpon them, but if euer times of trouble & calamity, & a fire flood of Gods wrath *Nah.* 1.6, 8. ſhould breake in, then would a good cõſcience ho'd vp the head with much comfort, and reſolution, whileſt thoſe that formerly made a ieaſt of a good Conſcience, ſhould haue aking,

and

and quaking hearts, by reaſon of thoſe vnmeaſurable fears that ſhall ſeize vpon them. A good Conſcience will make a man muſick; when *Iubal* ſhal be glad not onely to put vp, but with indignatiõ & anguiſh of heart to throw away and curſe his pipes. Well fare a good Conſcience in euill dayes. Pitch and trim vp this Arke, there is no ſuch prouiſion againſt euill dayes, as is a good Conſcience. It will doe a man ſeruice, and ſupport him, when all the braue ſpirits of the earth ſhal be blank, and at their wits end.

3. The comfort of a good conſcience in Time of Sickneſſe.

In the third place, the benefit and comfort of a good Conſcience, is conſpicuous in the time of ſickneſſe, or a mans priuate and perſonall croſſes in his eſtate, &c. A ſicke man with an hayle Conſcience, is a cheary and a comfortable man, *Pro.* 13.14. *The ſpirit of a man will ſuſteine his infirmity*; that is, the ſpirit it ſelfe being hayle, and ſound, it will enable him to beare any bodily ſicknes. *But a wounded ſpirit who can beare*; yea a wounded or a ſicke body,

dy, who can cõfortably bear, if the ſpirit or Conſcience be ſicke? But let the conſcience be good and ſound, and it helps a man with great eaſe and comfort, to beare the ſicknes of the body. It is a ſhrewd burden to beare two ſicknesſes at once, to haue a ſick body, & a ſick cõſcience. A man ſhal find enough of the eaſieſt of them ſingle and alone. But yet an hayle conſcience in an infirme body, ſweetly helps our infirmitie. Let a man haue euer ſo hayle & healthfull a body, yet if the conſcience bee naught, & withall awakened, fals to galling & griping, he ſhall find but little ioy in his bodily health; ſo contrarily, let a mans Conſcience be good, & though his body be ſick & weake, yet it is a great deale of ſweet refreſhmẽt that it ſhal receiue from the cõſcience.

Sickneſſe in it ſelfe is exceeding vncomfortable, and in the time of ſicknes commonly all bodily comforts, the comforts of meates, drinkes, & ſleepe, fayle, yea but then here is the benefit of a good cõſcience, that will not then fayle,

fayle, but as it is ſaid, *Eccl.* 10. 9. *Money anſwers all things*, ſo a good conſcience anſwers all things, the comfort of it ſupplies the wants of all other comforts. When in ſickneſs the comfort of meate, drinke, and ſleepe is gone, they are all found againe in the comfort of a good conſcience; that wil be meat, & drinke; that will be reſt and ſleep, that will make a mans ſick-bed ſoft, and eaſie, that ſhall be as the Angels were to Chriſt in his hunger in the Wildernes; *they miniſtred vnto him*, and ſo will a good Conſcience miniſter comfort in the want of all other comforts, ſo that a man may ſay of a good Conſcience, as wee vſe to ſay of ſome ſolid, ſubſtantial diſh, that there are Partridge, Phesants and Quailes in it; ſo though outward comforts ceaſe their office, and their worke be ſuſpended, yet a good Conſcience comes in its roome, and in it are meat, drinke, ſleep, eaſe, refreſhment, and what not? A good conſcience is an Electuary, or a Cordiall that hath all theſe ingredients in it. There

is no ſuch Cordiall to a ſick man, as the Cordiall of a good conſcience. All Phyſitians to this Phyſitian are but ſuch Phyſitians as *Iobs* friends, *Iob* 13. 4. *Yee are Phyſitians of no value.* A motiue of great waight to make men in loue with a good conſcience. Who can be free from ſickneſſe, & how tedious and wearifome a time is the time of ſickneſſe? Now who would not make much of a Cordiall that might cheare him then, of a receipt that might feed him then? As then we would be glad of a chearfull & comfortable ſpirit vpon our ſick beds, ſo make much of a good Conſcience. Whence is it that moſt men in their ſickneſſes haue ſuch drooping ſpirits, lye groaning altogether vnder their bodily paines, or lye ſottiſhly and ſenſelefly, no ſenſe of any thing but paine and ſickneſſe? Meerly from the want of a good Conſcience, they haue laid vp no Cordial, no comfortable Electuary for themſelues in their health time againſt the day of ſicknes. Indeed you ſhall haue the miſerable

ſerable cõforters of the world on this maner chearing them; Why, how now man, where is your heart? Plucke vp a good heart man, neuer feare for a little ſickneſſe, &c. True indeed, they ſhould not need to feare, if they could plucke vp a good heart. But they that will pluck it vp when they are ſick, muſt lay it vp when they are well. He that hath a good conſcience to get when he lyes vpõ his ſick-bed, is like a man that hath his *Aqua vitæ* to buy when he is fallen into a ſwoune; A wiſe man that feares ſwouning, would haue his hot-water-bottle hanging alwayes ready at his beds head. But as in other croſſes by ſickneſſe and the like, ſo is the comfort of a good Conſcience, neuer more ſweet, then when a man is vnder the croſſe for Conſcience ſake, & ſuffers affliction and vexation to keepe a good conſcience. Then aboue all other times will cõſcience doe the office of a Comforter, and will ſtand to him that will ſtand for it. When *Nebuchadnezzar* heates his Fornace ſeauen times hotter

then at other times, then a good Conſcience will ſpeake comfort ſeuen times ſweeter then at other times.

Are Gods Saints for good Conſcience ſake in priſon? Good Conſcience wil make their priſõs delectable hortyards. So doth *Algerius* an Italian martyr date a comfortable Epiſtle of his, *For the delectable hortyard of the Leonine priſon*, a priſon in Venice ſo called. So that as he ſaid, that he had rather be in priſon with *Cato*, then with *Cæſar* in the Senate houſe, ſo in this regard it was more comfortable to bee with *Philpot* in the Cole-houſe, then with *Bonner*, in his Palace. *Bonners* Conſcience made his Palace a Cole-houſe, and a Dungeon, whilſt *Philpots* made the Cole-houſe a Palace.

Fox Acts and Mon. *Omnis nobis vilis eſt pœna, vbi pura comes eſt conſcientia. Tiburt. apud Biron. An.* 168.

Are Gods Saints in the Stocks? *Better it is*, ſayes *Philpot*, *to ſit in the Stocks of the world, then in the ſtockes of a damnable Cõſcience.* Therefore though they bee in the Stockes, yet euen then, *the righteous doth ſing and reioyce*, yea, euen in the Stockes, and priſon; *Paul* and

and *Silas* ſang in the Stockes. Sing in the Stockes? Nay more; they can ſing in the flames, and in the midſt of the fires. *Iſ.*24.15. *Glorifie God in the fires.* And worthy *Hawkes* could clap his hands in the middeſt of the flames. So great and ſo paſſing all vnderſtanding is the peace & comfort of a good conſcience. So that in ſome ſenſe that may be ſaid of it which is ſpoken of faith, *Heb.* 11.34. By it *they quenched the violence of fire.* Gods ſeruants were ſo rapt, & rauiſht with the ſenſe of Gods loue, and their inward peace of Conſcience, that they ſeem'd to haue a kind of happy dedolency, and want of feeling of the ſmart of outward torments.

Hinc eſt quod è contrario innocens etiam inter ipſa tormenta fruitur conſcientiæ ſecuritate, & cum de pœna metuat de innocentia gloriatur. Hieron. ad Demetri. ad ep. 1.

Who knowes what trialls God may bring him to? We haue no patent for our peace, nor his free libertie in the profeſſion of the Goſpell. Suppoſe we ſhould be cald to the ſtake for Chriſts ſake. Would wee be chearefull, would we ſing in the flames? Get a good conſcience. The cauſe of Chriſt is a good cauſe, now with a good cauſe get a

good conſcience, & wee ſhall be able with all cheerfulnes to lay downe our liues for Chriſt, and his Goſpel ſake.

CHAP. XII.

The comfort and benefit of a good Conſcience in the dayes of Death & Iudgement.

4. The comfort of a good conſcience at the day of Death.

IN the fourth place, The time of death is a time wherin the benefit and comfort of a good Conſcience is exceeding great. Death hath a ghaſtly looke and terrible, able to daunt the proudeſt & braueſt ſpirit in the world, but then hath it a ghaſtly looke indeed, when it faces an euill conſcience. Indeed ſometimes, & moſt cõmonly, conſcience in many, is ſecure at the time of death. God in his iuſtice, ſo plaging an affected ſecurity in life, with an inflicted ſecuritie at Death. And the Lord ſeemes to ſay as once to the Prophet, Goe make their Conſciences aſleep at their death, as they haue made it aſleep all their life, leſt Conſcience

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ſhould ſee and ſpeake, and they heare, and be ſaued. God deales with conſcience as with the Prophet, *Ezek.* 3.26. *I will make thy tongue cleaue to the roof of thy mouth, that thou ſhalt be dumbe*; therfore they die, though not deſperately as *Saul*, and *Achitophel*, yet ſottiſhly without comfort, and feeling of Gods loue as *Nabal*. But if conſcience bee awakened, and haue its eies, and mouth opened, no heart can imagine the deſperate and vnſufferable diſtreſſes of ſuch an heart, *Terrours take hold of him as waters*, *Iob* 27.20. *Terrours make him afraid on euery ſide*, *Iob* 18.11. Then is that true, *Iob* 25.23,24. *He knowes that the day of darkneſſe is ready at hand. Trouble & anguiſh ſhall make him afraid, they ſhall preuaile againſt him, as a King ready to the battell.* And no wonder, for he is now brought vnto the *King of Terrours*, as Death is called, *Iob* 18.14. A man that hath an ill Conſcience, if his eyes be opened, and his Conſcience awakened, he ſees death in all the terrible ſhapes that may bee. Some-

times hee sees death comming like a mercilesse Officer, and a cruell Sergeant, to arrest, and to drag him by the throat to the prison and place of Torment, *Psal.* 55. 15. *Let death seize upon them.* They see it comming like that cruell seruant in the Parable to his fellow, *Math.* 18. catching them by the very throat.

Sometimes he sees death in the shape of some greedy Lyõ, or some rauening Wolfe ready to deuour him, & to feed vpon his carkase, *Ps.* 49. 14. *Death shall feed on them*, euen as a rauenous beast shall feed vpon his prey. Imagine in what a terrible plight the *Samaritans* where in when the Lyons set vpon thẽ, 2. *Kin.* 17. & by it imagine in what case an ill Conscience is, when it beholds the face of death. It puts an ill conscience into that case in good earnest that *Dauid* was in, in the case of trial, *Ps.* 55. 4. 5. *My heart is sore pained within me, & the terrors of death are fallen vpon mee, fearfulnesse and trembling are come vpon me, and horror hath ouerwhelmed me.*

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Sometimes again he ſees death as the *Iſraelites* the fiery ſerpents with mortal ſtings; Sometimes as a mercileſs landlord, or the Sheriffe comming with a Writ of *Firmæ eiectione*, to throw him out of houſe and home, and to turne him to the wide Common; yea he ſees death as Gods executioner & meſſenger of eternall death, yea, he ſees death with as much horror as if hee ſaw the Deuill. In ſo many fearefull ſhapes appeares death to an euill conſcience vpon the death-bed. So as it is indeed the *King of terrors* to ſuch an one that hath the terrours of Conſcience within. There is no one thought ſo terrible to ſuch an one, as the thought of death, nothing that he more wiſhes to auoid. Oh! how loath, and how vnwilling is ſuch an one to die.

But come now to a man that hath liued as *Paul* did in all good conſcience, and how is it with him vpon his death-bed? His end is peace; ſo full of ioy and comfort; ſo is he rauiſhed with the inward and vnſpeakable conſolations of his

his conſcience, that it is no wonder at all that *Balaam* ſhould wiſh to dye the death of the righteous, the death of a man with a good Conſcience.

The day of a mans mariage, *is the day of the ioy* of a mans *heart*, *Can.*3.11. and the day of mariage is not ſo ioyfull a day, as is the day of death to a good Conſcience. There are but few that can marry with that ioy wherewith a good conſcience dies.

It enables a man not onely to looke *Ananias* and the Counſell in the face, but euen to looke death it ſelfe in the face, without thoſe amazing terrours, yea, it makes the face of Death ſeeme louely, and amiable. He whoſe conſcience is good, and ſees the face of God reconciled to him in Chriſt, he can ſay as *Iacob* did when he ſaw the face of *Ioſeph*, *Gen.*46.30. *Now let me dye, ſince I haue ſeene thy face.* It is the priuiledge of a good cõſcience alone, to go to the graue, as *Agag* did to *Samuel*, and to ſay that truly, which he ſpake beſides the book, 1.*Sam.*15.32. *He came pleaſantly,*

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and he ſaid, Surely the bitternes of death is paſt. He was deceiued, and therefore had no ſuch cauſe to be ſo pleaſant, but a good Conſcience can, yea, cannot chuſe but be ſo pleaſant, euen when going out of the world, becauſe the guilt of ſinne being waſhed away in Chriſts blood; it knowes that the bitterneſs of death is paſt, and the ſweetneſſe of life eternall is at hand.

A man whoſe debts are paid, he dares goe out of doores, dare meet and face the Sergeants, and the conſcience purged by the blood of Chriſt, can looke as vndauntedly on the face of death. He that hath forgottē the ſting, that is, the guilt of cōſcience, taken away by faith in Chriſt, he lookes not vpon death as the *Iſraelites* vpon the fiery Serpents, but lookes vpon it as *Paul* doth, 1. *Cor.* 15. *O death where is thy ſting?* Who feares a Bee, an Hornet, a Snake, or a Serpent, when they haue loſt their ſting. The guilt of ſinne is the ſting of Conſcience, is the ſting of death that ſtings the conſcience. *The ſting of death*

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is ſinne. 1. *Cor.* 15. Plucke then ſinne out of the conſcience, and at once the conſcience is made good, and death made weake, and diſarmed of his weapon. And when the conſcience ſees death vnſtinged & diſarmed, it is freed of feare, and euen in the very act of death, can ioyfull triumph ouer death, oh Death where is thy ſting?

A good Conſcience lookes vpon death, as vpon the Sheriffe that comes to giue him poſſeſſion of his Inheritance, or as *Lazarus* vpon the Angels that came to carry his ſoule into *Abrahams* boſome, and therefore can welcome death, & entertaine him ioyfully. And wheras an ill conſcience makes a man ſee death as if he ſaw the Deuill, a good conſcience makes a man ſee the face of death, as *Iacob* ſaw *Eſaus* face, *Gen.* 33. *I haue ſeene thy face, as the face of God*; they ſee the face of death with vnſpeakeable ioy, rauiſhment of heart and exultation of ſpirit.

Well now, what a motiue haue we here, to make vs labour for good conſcience.

ſcience. Euen *Balaam* himſelfe would faine make a good end,& die in peace: and who wiſhes not his death-bed may be a Mount *Nebo*, from whence he may ſee the heauenly *Canaan*? Lo here, *Balaam*, the way to dye the death of the righteous, *I haue liued in all good Conſcience vnto this day*. They that haue conſcience in their life, ſhall haue comfort at their death; They that liue conſcionably, ſhall die comfortably, They that liue in all good conſcience til their dying day, ſhall depart in the abundance of comfort at their dying day.

There will come a day wherein we muſt lay downe theſe Tabernacles, the day of death wil aſſuredly come. How lamentable a thing wil it then be, to be ſo deſtitute,& deſolate of all comfort, as to be driuen to that extremity, as to curſe our birth day? oh! what would Comfort be worth at our laſt houre, at our laſt gaſpe, whilſt our deareſt frieds ſhall be weeping, wringing their hads and lamenting, then, then what would inward cõfort be worth? Who would

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not hold the whole world an easie price for it then? Well then, would we then haue Cõfort and Ioy, oh then get a good cõscience now, which wil yeeld comfort, when all other comforts shall vtterly faile, & shall be life in the middest of death. How happy is that man, that when the sentence of death is passed vpon him, can say with *Hezekiah*, *Isa.* 38. 3. *Remember now O Lord, I beseech thee, how I haue walked before thee in truth & with a perfect heart, & haue done that which is good in thy sight.* Indeed the text sayes, that *Hezekiah* wept sore, but yet, not as fearing death, for hee could not feare death, who had thus feared God, but because the promise was not yet made good to him in a son & Heire of his kingdome, hence came those teares. It is otherwise an vnspeakable ioy, that such a Conscience as *Hezekiahs* was, will speake to a man vpon his death-bed.

Euery one professes a desire to make a good end: Here is the way to make good that desire, to liue in all good con-

cõſcience. Alas how pitifull, & miſerable a condition liue moſt men in. All the dayes of their life & health, they haue no regard of a good Conſcience. Notwithſtanding that men are preſſed continually to this one care, by the inſtancy and importunity of Gods miniſters, yet how miſerably is it neglected? Well, at laſt the day of death comes, & then what would not they giue for a comfortable end? If the gold of Ophir would purchaſe comfort, it ſhould flie then. Then poaſt for this Miniſter, & runne for the other, as in the ſweating ſickneſſe in King *Edwards* dayes, then for Gods ſake but one word of cõfort, then O bleſſed men of God, one word of peace. Now alas what would you haue them doe? Are they, or your own courſes in fault, that you want comfort at your death? What would you haue vs doe? Wee muſt referre you to your owne Conſciences, wee cannot make oyle of flint, nor cruſh ſweet Wine out of ſowre Grapes, we dare not flatter you againſt your conſcien-

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ces. If you would giue vs a world, wee cannot comfort you when your owne conſciences witneſſe againſt you, that ſuch comforts belong not to you. Doe not idely in this caſe hope for comfort from Miniſters, be it known vnto you, you muſt haue it from your owne conſciences. Many on their death-bedde cry to the Miniſter, as ſhe did to the King, 2. *King.* 6. 26, 27. *Helpe my Lord O King.* But marke what hee anſwers, *If the Lord doe not helpe thee, whence ſhall I helpe thee, out of the barne floore, or out of the Wine preſſe?* So muſt wee anſwere to ſuch as cry, Helpe, helpe, O man of God: If God and your owne conſciences helpe you not, whence ſhal we helpe you? If there had beene Corne within the barnes, the King could eaſily haue helped her, but he could not make corne: So if men haue carryed any thing into their conſciences, if they themſelues haue inned any prouiſion and comfort, by being conſcionable in their liues, then we can helpe & comfort them, but otherwiſe

do

do not thinke that wee can make comforts, and make good Conſciences vpon your death-beds. If your conſciences can ſay for you, that you haue bin carefull in your life time to know God, to walke holily & religiouſly before him, &c. then we dare be bold to comfort and cheare you, then dare we ſpeake peace confidently to you. But if your conſciences accuſe you of your ignorance, your oathes, Sabbath breaches, worldlineſſe, rebellion, vncleanneſſe, oppreſſion, drunkenneſſe, &c. & finally, impenitency: What is it you would haue vs to doe? What can we ſay, but as the Prophet to *Zedekiah*, *Ier.* 37. 19. *Where* are now *your prophets that propheſied vnto you, ſaing the King of Babylon ſhall not come againſt you?* So, where be thoſe that in your life time told you, yee need to be ſo carefull, & preciſe to keepe good conſciences, leſſe adoe will ſerue the turne, *now* what thinke yee of them? *now* what peace haue you in thoſe wayes, what comfort can theſe giue you *now?*

Or else what can we say when men in anguish of conscience lye tossing vpon their beds, but what *Reuben* said to his brethren when they were in distresse, *Gen.* 42.21.22. *Did not I warn you, saying, Sin not, &c.* So must wee, what doe ye call to vs for comfort? did not we warne you many a time & oft, saying, sinne not, nor liue in those dangerous courses? Did not we warne you? Oh to haue our consciences and Gods Ministers thus to grate vpon vs, what an vncomfortable condition will this be? Would we then preuent such sorrow, and bee cheerfull, and cheered at our latter ends? lay vp a good conscience, then, lay in somewhat for conscience, and Gods Ministers to worke vpon, & from which they both may bee able to raise comfort to you. Get a good Conscience, & liue in it all thy daies, and then though thou shouldest want the benefit of a comforting Minister, yet thy conscience shall doe the office of a comforting Minister, and shall be the same vnto thee that the Angel was

vnto Chriſt in his agony, *Luke* 22. 43. and ſhall miniſter ſuch comfort vnto thee, as ſhall make thee ready to leape into the graue for ioy. This ſhall be as another *Iacobs* ſtaffe for thee to leane & reſt vpon, when thou ſhalt be vpon thy death-bed. If men knew but the worth of a good Conſcience at the houre of death, we ſhould need no other motiue to worke mens hearts to be in loue therewith.

5. The comfort of a good conſcience at the day of Iudgment.

Fiftly and laſtly, the benefit & comfort of a good Conſcience is great at the day of iudgement. Oh the ſweet comfort and confidence of heart that a good Conſcience will yeeld vnto a man at that day. What will become of all the Gigantean ſpirits, & the braue fellowes of the earth then? Alas for their yellings, and curſing of themſelues, and their companions! What howling and crying to the mountains, as they did, *Reuel.* 6. *Hide* vs, *Couer* vs, yea, daſh and quaſh vs in a thouſand pieces. When an ill Conſciences is awakened, it is not to be imagined how

ſmall a thing will gaſtre it. *The ſound of a ſhaken leafe ſhall chaſe them, and they ſhall flye as flying from a ſword, and they ſhall fall when none purſues. Leuit.26.36. A dreadfull ſound is in his eares, Iob 15. 21.* He heares nothing, but he thinkes he heares alwaies ſome terrible and dreadfull noyſe. And then if a ſhaken leafe ſhall chaſe, and ſhall put them into a ſhaking feare, what caſe will ſuch be in, when as *Iob* ſpeakes, *Iob 26. 11. The pillars of heauen ſhall tremble*, and when *the powers of heauen ſhall bee ſhaken, Luk.21.26.* When the heauēs ſhal ſhake & flame aboue them, when the earth ſhall quake, and tremble vnder them, what caſe will they be in then? If meere imaginations fill their eares with *dreadfull ſounds* where there is no ſound at all: Oh what a dreadfull ſound ſhall be in their eares when the *Sea ſhall roare, Luk.21.25.* when *the laſt trumpe ſhall ſound, 1.Cor.15.* when they ſhall heare the *ſhout and voyce of an Angel, 1.Theſ.4.16.* what dreadfull ſounds will theſe be in the eares of il Conſci-

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ences? How will theſe dreadful ſounds confound their ſoules with horrour and amazement.

But now for a good conſcience, how is it with it then? Euen amidſt all theſe dreadfull ſounds it *lookes vp*, & *lifts vp the head*, *Luk.* 21.28. and enables a man with a cheery confidence *to ſtand before the Sonne of man*, *Luke* 21.36.

The malefactor who lookes for the halter, how dreadfull is the iudges cõming to the Aſſiſes, attended with the troupes of halberds, in his eye; but the priſoner that knowes his own innocency, & that he ſhall be quit and diſcharged, his heart leaps at the Iudges approach, how terrible ſoeuer he come attẽded to the bench, it glads his heart to ſee that day, which ſhall be the day of his liberty and releaſe. *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him*, *Io.* 13.16. much leſſe, ſhall *looke vp*, & *lift vp his head*, or *ſtand before him*, *Pſ.* 1.5. But the righteous, & the man with a good Conſcience, he ſhall hold vp, and cheereſully lift vp his head, when all the ſurly,

and proud *Zamzummins* of the earth, that here lifted vp their heads and nebs ſo high, ſhall become howling and trembling ſuitors to the deafe mountaines to hide them from the preſence of the Lambe on the throne. Oh! they that feare the Lambe on the throne, how dreadfull vnto them will bee the Lyon on the throne?

It will bee with good and euill conſciences in that day, as it was with *Pharaohs* Butler, and Baker, on *Pharaohs* birth-day. The Butler hee knew hee ſhould be reſtored to honour, and goe from the priſon to the Palace, therefore he comes out of the priſon full of ioy, and jollitie, he holds vp his head, and outfaces the proudeſt of his enemies. But the Baker hee knowes his head ſhall bee lift from off him, and therefore when *Pharaohs* birth-day comes, wherein all others are in iollity, yet hee droopes and hangs downe the head, hee knowes it would proue an heauy day of reckoning with him.

Such will the apparition of Chriſt vnto

vnto iudgement be, vnto good & euill consciences, as was the apparition of the Angell, *Matth.* 28. 2.3.4.5. *There was a great earthquake, for the Angell of the Lord descended from heauen, his countenance was like lightning, and his rayment white as snow.* Here was a terrible sight, but yet not alike terrible to all the beholders. For, *for feare of him the keepers did shake, & became like dead men.* But the *Angel said vnto the women, feare not ye, for I know that ye seeke Iesus.* So at the last day when Christ shall come to iudgement, euill consciences shall bee as the Keepers, whilest all good Consciences shall heare that comfortable voyce, *Feare not yee*, for I know that you haue fought for God, and all your dayes ye haue fought to keepe a good Conscience. How effectuall a motiue should this bee, how strongly should this worke with vs. As wee should bee glad to hold vp our heads, when the glorious ones of the earth shall hang them downe, to leape for ioy, when others shall howle for bitter

anguish of spirit, so now whilest wee haue the day of life and grace, labour wee to get and keepe good cõsciences.

Chap. XIII.

A second Motiue, A good Conscience is a continuall feast.

The second motiue to a good cõscience.

THus haue wee seene the first motiue; from the benefit and comfort of a good Conscience, in such cases, and times, as a man stands most in need of comfort. A *second motiue* followes, and that is that wee finde, *Prou.* 15. 15. *A good Conscience is a continuall feast.* 1. It is a *feast.* 2. Better then a feast. It is a *continuall* feast.

1. *It is a feast.* The excellency of a good Conscience is set forth by the same thing, by which our Sauiour sets forth the happinesse of heauē, *Luk.* 14. And well may both be set forth by the same metaphor, considering what a neere affinitie there is betweene heauen and

Quo enim melius epulantur animi quam bonis factis? aut quid aliud tam

and a good Conſcience, and that there is no feaſting in heauen, vnleſſe there be firſt the feaſt of a good conſcience here on earth. But why a *feaſt?* A feaſt for three regards.

facile poteſt explere iuſtorum mentes quam boni operis conſcientia? Ambr. de offic. l. 1. c. 31.

1. For the *ſelfe ſufficiency*, and ſweet *ſatisfaction* and *contentment* that a good Conſcience hath within it ſelfe. Feaſting & faſting are oppoſite. In faſting vpon the want of food there is an emptineſſe and a griping hunger, which makes the body inſatiably to craue. But at a feaſt there is abundance, and variety of all diſhes & dainties, ready at hand to ſatisfie a mans appetie to the full, he can haue a mind to nothing but it is before him. The very beſt of euery thing that is to bee had is at a feaſt. *a feaſt of fat things, Iſa. 25. 6. of fat things full of marrow.* Such is the ſufficiency of ſatisfaction, the abundance of ſweetneſſe, and contentment that is to bee found in a good Conſcience. It is a table richly furniſht with all varieties, and dainties. There is no pleaſure, cõfort, or contentment that a mans

mans heart can wish, but it may bee abundantly had in a good conscience; as at a feast there is a collection of all the dainties and delicacies that sea & land can afford.

2. For the *mirth* and *ioy* of it. *A feast is made for laughter, Eccles.* 10.19. At a feast there is mirth, musick, & delight in the comfortable vse of the creatures. Heauinesse of heart, pensiuenesse, and sorrow, these are banisht frō the house of feasting. Fasting & feasting are opposite, in fasting indeed there is weeping, mourning, and sorrowing; but in a feast contrarily, there is mirth, merriment and ioy.

There were vnder the Law appointed solemn holy feasts anniuersarily to be celebrated, & at those solemn feasts were the siluer Trumpets sounded, *Num.* 10.10. & the sound of the trumpets was a *ioyfull sound, Ps.* 89.15. For their festiuities were to be kept with speciall ioy, *Deut.* 16.10.11.13.14.15. *Thou shalt keepe* the feast *of weekes vnto the Lord, &c. and thou shalt* reioyce *before*

fore the Lord, &c. Thou shalt obserue the feast *of Tabernacles seuen dayes, &c. And thou shalt* reioyce *in the* feast, *&c. Therfore thou shalt surely reioyce.* And that extraordinary feast on the fourteenth and fifteenth of *Adar*, in memoriall of their deliuerance from *Hamã*, see how it was keept, *Esth.* 9. 19. 22. They kept them dayes of *gladnesse and feasting, of feasting and ioy.* Euen such is the excellency of a good Conscience. All the merriment and musicke, wine & good cheare, will not make a mans heart so light and so merry, as the wine which is drunke at the feast of a good conscience will doe. This takes away all heauinesse and sadnesse of spirit, and hath the like effects with naturall wine. It makes a man *forget* his spirituall *pouerty, and remember that misery no more*, *Pro.* 31. 7. Nay, as wine not onely takes away sadnes, but withall brings a naturall gladnes with it, *Psal.* 104. 15. *Wine that makes glad the heart of man*: so doth this wine at this feast. *Psal.* 97. 11, 12. *Light is sowne for the righteous, and*

gladnesse

gladnes for the vpright in heart, Reioyce in the Lord ye righteous. None so glad an heart, as the vpright in heart. Nay such is the vigour and strength of this wine, at this feast, that it not only glads a mans heart, but makes a man as not able to cõtaine, euen to shout for ioy, *Psal.* 32. 11. *Shout for ioy all yee that are vpright in heart*, yea *shout aloud for ioy*, *Psal.* 132. 16. That looke as it is said of the Lord, *Psalm.* 78. 65. *The Lord awaked like a mightie man that shouts by reason of wine.* So such is the plenty, abundance, sweetnesse, & strength of the wine of this feast, that it makes men in a holy iollitie, euen to break forth into shouting, & singing. This wine being liberally drunken, wherein there is no excesse, fils a mans heart with such an ouerflowing exuberancy of ioy, as hee cannot hold, but he must needs shew it in Psalms, Hymnes, & spirituall songs; & hence it is that *the righteous do sing and reioyce*, *Pro.* 29. 6. So that what ioy a feast can yeeld, that can a good Conscience yeeld much more, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12.

This

This is our reioycing, *the teſtimony of our Conſcience.* Yea & that ioy commanded, *Deut.* 16. at the feaſt of Tabernacles what was it but a type of that ſpirituall ioy, that the faithfull vnder Chriſt ſhould haue in keeping the feaſt of a good conſcience? The feaſt of a good conſcience is the true feaſt of Tabernacles, in which as in the other, there ſhall need no charge to reioyce, & bee merry, this feaſt will put ſuch ſpirit & life into a man, as ſhall make him ſing, skip, and ſhout for ioy.

The feaſt of a good Conſcience is not like a funerall feaſt, where mirth & ioy are vnſeemely, & vnſeaſonable gueſts, there are heauy hearts & looks, teares, & mourning, (which by the way how well they ſuit with feaſting let the world iudge) but the feaſt of a good Conſcience is a nuptiall feaſt, a marriage feaſt, and the day of marriage is *the day of the ioy of a mans heart, Cant.* 3. 11. Such a feaſt, euen a ioyfull marriage feaſt doth a good conſcience make.

Often-

Oftentimes theſe bodily feaſts are but heauy feaſts; many for all their good cheere, company, and muſicke, cannot put away the heauines of their hearts, but euen in their feaſt are ſad hearted, and *Sampſons* wife *wept* all the dayes of the feaſt, *Iudges* 14. 17. yea though a marriage feaſt. But in this feaſt of a good Conſcience here is no ſorrow, heauineſs, or ſad melancholly, but all ioy and gladneſſe.

3. For the *ſociety* & *company*. A feaſt is a collection, and a conuention of many good friends together, whoſe ſociety and friendſhip is ſweet each to other. There is no feaſt can afford the like company that a good Conſcience hath. *Woe to him that is alone*. *Eccleſ.* 4. that is the woefull and ſolitary condition of euill conſciences. But a good conſcience hath euer good company, *is not alone*, for the Father is with him, *Iohn.* 16. 23. yea, the Sonne is with it: & Chriſt, and the man with a good conſcience, they *ſuppe*, and *feaſt* together, *Reu.* 3. 20. yea, and the Spirit is with it.

1. *Cor.*

1. Cor. 13. 13. *The Communion of the holy Ghoſt bee with you.* What feaſt in the world can ſhew ſuch company? And good company is the chiefe thing in a feaſt. Thus a good conſcience is a feaſt.

2. It is *better* then a feaſt. And that in three regards,

1. In regard of the *continuance* and *perpetuity* of it, *A continuall feaſt. Nabal* made a feaſt, a feaſt like a King, 1. *Sam.* 25. but that feaſt laſted but one day. *Sampſon* at his mariage had a feaſt that laſted ſeuen dayes, *Iudg.* 14. 17. but yet that feaſt had an end. *Ahaſhuerosh* his feaſt was the longeſt feaſt that euer we reade of, *Eſth.* 1. 4. *He made a feaſt many dayes, an hundred and foureſcore dayes.* But yet *verſ.* 5. it is ſaid, *And when thoſe dayes were expired.* So this long feaſt had an end. It was continued for many daies, but yet no continual feaſt, it had an end. The feaſt of a good conſcience is not like an *Vniuerſity* Commencement feaſt. Great exceedings, & extraordinary good cheere and company for one night, but the next mor-

row

now to their bare Commons againe. Not like the *feaſt* of the *Nativity*, at which time there is great feaſting, & great cheere euery where for twelue dayes, but when thoſe dayes are ouer, many a man is glad of bread & cheeſe, glad to skip at a cruſt. But this is a continual feaſt all the year long, all a mans life long. Therefore 1. *Theſ.* 5. 16. *Reioyce euermore*, keepe open houſe, and feaſting all the yeare long. The ioy of a good Conſcience was figured by the ioy at the feaſt of Tabernacles. That feaſt laſted ſeuen daies. The ioy muſt be as long. Seuen the number of perfection, denoted the whole courſe of a mans life, & ſo their ſeuen dayes ioy, the *continuall ioy* & iollity of this *continuall feaſt* of a good conſcience.

Conſcience and a wife, as they agree in many things, be they good, be they ill, ſo in this alſo. If the conſcience be euill, it is like an *euill wife*, and ſhe a *continuall euill*. *Pro.* 27. 15. *A continuall dropping in a very rainy day, & a contentious woman are alike.* The contentions of

of a wife are *a continuall dropping, Prou.* 19. 13. A ſhrewiſh waſpiſh wife, is a continuall vexation & diſquiet. Such is an euill Conſcience, a continual ſorrow. Contrarily, a good Conſcience is like a *good wife*, a good wife is *a continuall comfort*, a comfort in health, in ſickneſſe, in peace, in diſtreſſe, *Pro.* 31. 12. *She doth him good and not euill* all the dayes *of her life*. Not ſome good and a great deale of euill withal, but al good, good and not euill. Not good at ſometime, and none at other times, *but all the dayes of her life*, ſhe is a continual comfort. So is the comfort of a good Conſcience. It keeps holy-day and feaſting euery day. It is all feaſt; a feaſt for euer; there is no *Lent*, nor *faſting* daies that interrupt this feaſt. This is the peculiar priuiledge of this feaſt to be cōtinuall; belly-feaſting cannot be ſo: for 1. A man cannot alwaies feaſt though he would, a mans reuenues would bee exhauſt, his expenſes would ſoon ſink his eſtate. Continuall feaſting would ſoone begger & vndoe a man of good

eſtate, *Pro.*21.17. *He that loues Wine & Oyle ſhall not bee rich.* It is not ſo here; the reuenue of a good Conſcience is bottomleſs, it cannot be ſpent, & therfore is able to keepe a rich and a full furniſht Table all the yeare long. Here is a myſtery in this feaſt, the larger expences to day, the more laid in to keep the feaſt the better to morrow; a man growes rich by feaſting.

2. Suppoſe a man might be able to feaſt alwaies, or might feed at another mans Table continually, yet would it weary a man beyõd meaſure. It would but gugge and cloy a man. All earthly pleaſures haue a ſatietie, and breed a loathing by frequent vſe. But this is the admirable excellency of this feaſt of a good Conſcience, here a man may feed and eate with continuall delight. At this continuall feaſt, here is a continuall freſh appetite, & freſh delights; here is continuall feaſting without loathing and ſatiety.

Voluptas tuns cum maxime delectat extinguitur. Nec multum loci habet; itaq; cito implet & tædio eſt, & poſt primum impetũ marcet. Senec. de vit. beat. c. 7.

3. Neither *may* belly feaſting be *continuall.* There be ſome times wherin it is

is inconuenient and vnlawfull. To ſpeake with the faireſt, that day which God hath ſanctified for his ſeruice, is not ſo conuenient for feaſting. It may be no leſs dangerous to deuour *ſanctified time*, then *ſanctified things*. And in this caſe hath that ſaying a truth, *It is not meet that we ſhould leaue the Word of God, and ſerue Tables*, *Act.* 6. 2. But now this feaſt without any doubt may bee on the Sabbath, yea, it is the ſpeciall feſtiuall, & high day of the week, wherein this feaſt is beſt kept. Againe, there be times wherein God cals to ſolemne faſting and humiliation, as when the Church is either in dãger or diſtreſſe, but this feaſt is not hindred by faſting, it will ſtand well with it, and many a ſpeciall dainty diſh is ſerued in to this feaſting from a faſt.

4. Suppoſe a man could and might feaſt alwayes, yet were it a bruitiſh thing, and hog-like alwayes for a man to be cramming and crowding in belly cheere, alwaies to bee paunching and gutting. It is that for which the rich

Glutton is taxed, *Luk.* 16. that *he fared deliciouſly euery day*. But here to feaſt at this Table *euery day*, is that which makes a man euery whit as *Angel like*, as belly-feaſting euery day makes a man *ſwine-like*. Here it is a mans happineſſe to be a holy *Epicure*.

Nunquam credideris felicem qui aduentitio lætus eſt, exibit gaudium quod introuit. Senec. ep. 99.

2. It is better then other feaſts, in regard of the *Independencie* of this feaſt vpon any other out-ward thing. This feaſt is able to maintaine it ſelfe of it ſelfe, & within it ſelfe. A man that hath a good conſcience, hath a feaſt, though he haue nothing elſe but it. A good Conſcience, though it haue nothing but browne bread and water, yet this hard fare marres not the feaſt; For this feaſt *ſtands not in meates, and drinks, but in righteouſneſſe, peace, and ioy in the holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14. 17. *Quietneſſe and a dry morſell is better then an houſe full of good cheare with ſtrife*, Pro. 17. 1. Though it be but outward *quietnes*, when a man is free from vniuſt vexations, & the moleſtations of froward and contentious diſpoſition, euen ſuch quietnes makes

a *dry morſell* good cheere, makes a feaſt of a cruſt. But when there is inward quietneſſe of a good Conſcience, and a mans heart is at quiet from his peace with his God, what excellent cheere is a *dry morſell*, then? Though a man haue euer ſo good fare, yet to haue it ſawced with the bitterneſſe of contention, and to liue in a continuall wrangling with peeuiſh people, what poore content would a wel furniſht Table affoord ſuch a man? And what poore cheere, eſpecially, would al theſe feaſts in the world make, where there is brawling & contention from the cõſcience? Here then is the excellẽcy of this feaſt aboue all other feaſts. This feaſt is able to ſubſiſt, and to maintaine it ſelfe without other feaſting; other feaſting is nothing without this of a good conſcience. Other feaſting often hurts and hinders this feaſt, whileſt men by their vaine & licẽcious carriage therein, *Feaſting without al feare*, Iude 12. do make the Conſcience faſt and ſtarue; and whileſt their Quailes are beweene

their teeth, *leanneſſe enters into their ſoule. Pſalm.* 106. 5. So farre is bodily feaſting from helping, that it hinders this feaſting rather. Conſcience, can haue mirth enough without a feaſt, but little is the comfort and content that a feaſt can giue, where the Conſcience is not good. Men may ſet a face vpon it and bragge, laugh, and be iolly in their feaſting, but yet in the *middeſt of their laughter the heart is ſorrowfull, and the end of that mirth is heauineſſe, Prou.* 14. 13. Conſcience awakened euen in the middeſt of the greateſt iollitie, giues men many a bitter twitch at the heart, and in the middeſt of all their reuellings, giues them *Vineger* and *Gall* to drinke. A good Conſcience is it that ſweetens and ſeaſons all the diſhes of a feaſt, that is the ſawce that makes meat ſauoury, the ſugar that ſweetens Wine, that is the muſicke that makes a mans heart dance.

Sed nan eſt iſta hilaritas longa. Obſerua, videbis eoſdẽ in exiguum tempus acerrime ridere, & acerrime rudere. Senec. ep. 92.

But let a man goe to the moſt ſumptuous, and delicious feaſts without a good

good Conſcience, and how is it with him then? Iuſt as with *Belſhazzar*, *Dan.* 5. where the hand-writing on the wall marred all his mirth; or elſe it is in ſuch a caſe, as it was with *Haman*. The foole brags that he alone is inuited to *Eſthers* banquet with the King, *Eſth.* 5. 12. Oh how happy a man was he, vnder how fortunate a Planet was he borne, to be the King and Queenes Fauorite both? But ſee what little reaſon hee had to brag, *Chap.* 7. 2. Euen at the *banquet of Wine*, *Eſther* giues him a cup of gall: at the banquet of Wine doth ſhe accuſe *Haman* to the King. Oh! how many glory in their banquetting, & their feaſting, but how often do their conſciences put *Eſthers* tricke vpon them, euen accuſe them to God, and gall and gird them in the midſt of their wine? Conſcience ſerues many, as *Abſaloms* villains ſerued *Amnō*, when his heart was mery at *Abſaloms* feaſt, then they ſtabd him to the heart. Conſcience deales with them, as the *Iſraelites* were dealt withall in their Quaile feaſt. They

had their Quailes, and their dainties, but a man would rather want their good cheere, then haue their ſawce. Their ſweet meate had ſharpe ſawce. Whileſt the fleſh was betweene their teeth, Gods anger brake in vpon them. So whileſt many are chewing their dainties, Conſcience fils their mouth with grauell, and ſo ſawces and ſpices their diſhes, that they finde but little content therein. So miſerable are all feaſts and merriments of this world, when a man wants the independent feaſt of a good Conſcience. So happy alſo are they that haue the feaſt of a good conſcience, althoug they neuer taſte bit of other feaſt whilſt they liue, although they be denied the crummes that fall vnder the feaſting Gluttons Table.

3. It is better in regard of the *Vniuerſalitie* of it. As for belly feaſts, it ſtands not with euery mans condition, and purſe, to make them. It belongs onely to the richer & abler ſort to feaſt. Feaſting is a matter of charge & coſt, & ſo is

is out of the reach of the poorer ſort. But here is the excellency of this feaſt. The pooreſt that is may make it, and the poore haue as good priuiledge to make it as the rich, & the poore in this reſpect may keepe as good an houſe as the beſt Nobleman, yea, for the moſt part the poorer ſortkeep this feaſtbeſt. *Nabal* makes *a feaſt like a King*, but wretched man, in the mean time what feſt keeps his Conſcience? It may be many a poore Carmelite neighbour of his that went in a poore ruſſet coat, and liued in a poore thatcht cottage, kept that feaſt abundantly and richly, whileſt he poore ſot had not the crums that fell from their Tables. *Lazarus* could not haue the crummes that fell from the gluttons table, but how happy had it beene with the glutton if in ſtead of his delicious fare hee might haue had but the reuerſions of *Lazarus* boord. *Lazarus* may not come to his feaſt, no nor yet to his fragments, neither wil *Lazarus* cõdition permit him to feaſt it as the glutton did, but yet this

this feaſt of a good Conſcience, *Lazarus* may make as well as hee, and can, and doth keepe it, whileſt the glutton feeles many an hunger-biting gripe. What an excellent feaſt is this, aboue all other feaſts, wherein the ruſſet hath as much priuiledge as the veluet, the begger as the King, the poore tenant, as the rich Landlord? The rich Landlord often ſo feeds vpon, and eates vp his poor tenant by oppreſſion, that the tenant is kept low enough for feaſting; It is well with him if he haue food, he had not need thinke of feaſting. But loe now the excellent feaſt of a good conſcience: Here may the tenant keepe as good cheere as the Landlord, yea, and it may bee may feaſt, whileſt the rich Landlord is ready to ſtarue for want of this prouiſion.

Now then all this conſidered, what a *Motiue* ſhould it be to make vs in loue with a good Conſcience. How powerfully ſhould this perſwade vs thereto? When God would perſwade men to come to the ioyes of heauen, he vſes

no

no other argument then this, to inuite them to a feaſt, as in the Parable, *Luk.* 14. Behold, here is the ſame argumēt, to moue you to be in loue with a good Conſcience, behold the Lord inuites you to *a feaſt*, and to a feaſt where ye ſhall haue ſufficiency, without want, or loathing, where ye ſhall haue wine, mirth, muſick, and good Company to the full. The twelue dayes feaſt of the *Natiuitie*, how is it longed for before hand, and how welcommed when it is come? And what may the reaſon be? But onely becauſe it is a feaſting time. This is counted a bleſſed good Time: And why a bleſſed good Time? As Chriſt was a bleſſed good man, & the Prophet that ſhould come into the world, & therefore ſhould be made a King, becauſe he had fed, & filled their bellies, *Ioh.6.* So the moſt make that a bleſſed time, not for the memoriall of Chriſts Incarnation, but becauſe of the loaues Chriſt ſhall bee a King, and becauſe of the feaſt, the Time is bleſſed. Well then, & is the world ſo deſirous,

and

and ſo glad of feaſting? Are feaſting Times ſuch bleſſed Times? Loe then I inuite you to a feaſt, to a bleſſed good feaſt indeed, that will make you bleſſed and truly happy. Not to a feaſt of twelue dayes, but to a feaſt that laſts all the twelue moneths of the yeare, to a continuing, & a continuall feaſt. How glad are many when they may goe to a feaſt? Loe a way to make feaſts for your ſelues. What a credit is it counted in the world for a man to keepe a good, and great houſe, to keep feaſting and open houſe for all commers, during the Feſtiuitie of the twelue daies? Would wee haue this credit of good houſe-keeping, not for twelue dayes but for all the yeere long? Get good Conſciences, keepe good Conſciences. There is no ſuch *good houſe-keeper*, as is the *good Conſcience-keeper*; for a good Conſcience is a feaſt, a continuall feaſt.

There is nothing that men deſire more then to liue merrily, and how many ſtumble at Religion, & keeping of a good Conſcience, vnder an idle conceit

conceit that it is the way to marre all their mirth, & to make a man lumpiſh & melancholly. Doe not beleeue the diuell, do not beleeue his lying agents. It is a profane Prouerbe, that *Spiritus Caluinianus eſt ſpiritus melancholicus*. A good Conſcience is a feaſt, a feaſt with all dainties, muſicke, and wine. Can a man be melãcholly at a feaſt, at ſo ioyfull, & ſo ſweet a feaſt? Doth feaſting make men melancholly, or make men merry? make men weepe, or laugh? If a man ſhould cry downe feaſting with this argument, That it makes men melancholly, would not all men laugh him to ſcorne? And why then ſhould a man feare melancholly more from a good Conſcience, then from a feaſt? There is none liues ſo merry a life as he that keeps a good Conſcience, he is euery day at a feaſt, he is alwayes banquetting. Yea, the worſt diſhes of this feaſt, euen thoſe at the lower end of the Table, are better then the moſt choyce rarities of other feaſts. The very teares that a good cõſcience ſheds haue more ioy

ioy and pleasure in them, then the worlds greatest ioyes. And if the teares of a good conscience bee such, what is the mirth & laughter of it? If weeping bee so sweet, what is singing? If the courser dishes bee so dainty, what are the best seruices? Would we then liue merrily, and passe our dayes iocundly indeed? Get a good conscience, and thou keepest a continuall feast, & that continuall feast will keepe thee in continuall mirth, and continuall ioy. Yea, though thou be in affliction, and vnder crosses, so as thy dayes vnto the world may seeme exceedingly euill, yet shalt thou liue merrily as at a feast. Yea, this is the scope of the Scripture, *All the dayes of the afflicted are euill*, namely, in the eye and iudgement of the world: *but a good conscience*, namely, to the afflicted, *is a continuall feast*. A good conscience feasts then, and turnes fasting dayes into feasting dayes. A good conscience feasts a man in his pouerty, in his sicknesse, in the prison, and cheers vp a man with many a dainty bit.

bit. The wine of this feaſt makes them forget all their ſorrow.

Now then that we would be ſo wiſe as to hearken to Gods inuitation to this feaſt, *Let vs keepe the feaſt with the bread of ſincerity and truth*, 1. *Cor.* 5. 8. Take heed now that wee put not off God as thoſe did, *Luk.* 14. inuited to the feaſt, with the excuſes of Farmes, Oxen and the like. So doe many, vrge them to the keeping of a good conſcience, and their anſwer is, If they ſhould be ſo preciſe, how ſhall they liue, they ſhall haue but poore takings if they take ſuch a courſe, *I pray haue me excuſed*, I muſt liue. Thus they anſwer, as many good huſbands, when inuited to frequent feaſtings, do, No beleeue me it will not hold out, if I goe euery day a feaſting, I may go one day a begging, I muſt follow my buſineſs, and let feaſting goe. And ſo ſay men here. But take heed of putting off God thus. The time will come that thou wouldeſt giue all thine Oxen to haue but the ſcraps & crums of this feaſt, and thou ſhalt

ſhalt not haue them, God will ſerue thee as he did them, *Luk.* 14.24. *None of thoſe men which were bidden ſhall* taſte *of my ſupper*. Thoſe that care not to keepe the feaſt of a good Conſcience, ſhall neuer come to Gods feaſt in heauen. If you refuſe to come to his feaſt now, God will at the laſt day thruſt you out of doores, when you will bee preſſing and crowding in, and ſhall ſay to you, Get you hence ye deſpiſers of a good Conſcience, you ſcorned the feaſt of a good Conſcience, & therefore now the feaſt and gueſts of heauen ſcorne you, here is no roome for ſuch to feaſt here, who haue made their conſciences faſt heretofore.

Chap. XIIII.

A third and a fourth motiue to a good Conſcience.

The third motiue to a good cõſcience.

COme we now to a *third motiue*, that may yet helpe to ſtirre vp our mindes to this neeeſſary duty of getting

ting and keeping of a good conſcience. Beſides what hath beene ſaid, it is worthy of our conſideration, that without a good conſcience all our actions, yea our very beſt ſeruices to God are ſo farre from goodnes and acceptance, that they are abominable and diſtaſtefull vnto the Lord. The formall goodneſſe of euery mans actions is to bee iudged and eſteemed by the goodnes of his Conſcience, which being euill and defiled, makes all a mans actions to bee ſuch, 1. *Tim.* 1. 5. *The end of the commandement is loue.* But what kinde of loue doth the commandement require, will any ſhewes or ſhadowes of obedience ſerue the turne? will the bare duty doing paſſe for currant? No, but ſuch loue to God and man, and ſuch performance of obedience as proceeds from *a pure heart and a good Conſcience.* So that let a man doe all outward actions of obedience, yet if a good Conſcience bee wanting, all is nothing, *For the end of the Commandement is loue out of a good Con-*

ſcience. As is a mans conſcience, ſo are all his workes, and therefore nothing acceptable that a wicked man doth, becauſe he doth it with an ill conſcience. *To the pure all things are pure,* but to the defiled their Conſcience is defiled, and that being defiled, it defiles all it meddles with, as vnder the Law the Leper defiled all he touched. The beſt meate, diſht & dreſſed with defiled and dirty hands, is loathſome to vs.

The honeſt workes of a mans calling are good workes in themſelues, but no good workes to him that doth them without a good Conſcience, *Pro.* 21.4. *An high looke, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is ſinne.* The calling of husbandry is counted the moſt honeſt calling of all others, yet where a good conſcience is wanting, a mans very plowing is ſinne. Come to holy duties of Religion and Gods ſeruice, and how is it with a man wanting a good Conſcience in them? That curſe of *Dauids*, *Pſalm.* 109.8. *Let his prayer be turned into ſinne*, lies vpon the ſerui-

ſeruices of all euill cõſciences. See *Pro.* 15.8. *The ſacrifice of the wicked*, that is, of him that hath an euill conſcience, *is an abomination: but the praier of the vpright*, that is, of a man that hath a good and vpright Conſcience, *is his delight*. Obſerue the oppoſition. He ſayes not the *prayer* of the wicked, and the *praier* of the vpright, nor the *ſacrifice* of the wicked, and the *ſacrifice* of the vpright; but the *ſacrifice* of the wicked, and the *Prayer* of the vpright. A ſacrifice had prayer with it, but yet it was more ſumptuous and more ſolemn then ſingle prayer. Now who would not think but ſuch coſt ſhould make a man welcome, yet the ſingle prayer of the vpright is accepted, whileſt this ſacrifice is an abomination, yea, and that a vile abomination, *Iſa.* 66.3. A man of euill conſcience delighting in his abominations, makes his holieſt ſeruices ſuch. Let ſuch an one come to the Sacraments, and how will it be with him there? euen as in the former, To the impure, euen the pure Sacraments are

impure. *Simon Magus* rather defiles the waters of baptiſme, then they clenſe him, and it is not carnall baptiſme that auailes any thing, without the *anſwere & ſtipulation of a good Conſcience*, 1. *Pet.* 3. 21. And for the Sacrament of the Supper, whether doth it profit an vncleane conſcience, or ſuch a Conſcience pollute it? It may be iudged by a like caſe reſolued, *Hag.* 2. 11. 14. The vnclean perſon by a dead boby touching the *Bread*, or *Wine*, or *Oyle*, makes theſe to bee *vncleane*. The ceremoniall vncleanneſſe by the touch of a *dead body*, typified the morall vncleanneſſe of an euill conſcience, vnpurged from *dead workes*. God lookes eſpecially at the Conſcience in all our ſeruices, and if hee findes that foule and filthy, hee throwes the dung of mens ſacrifices in their faces, that come with the dung of their filthy conſciences, before his face. See therefore how *Paul* ſerues God, 2. *Tim.* 1. 3. *Whom I ſerue from my forefathers with pure Conſcience.* It is an *impure ſeruice* that is not performed with

with a *pure Conſcience*, as ſleight as the world make of puritie. *How much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt purge your Cõſciences from dead workes*, *Heb.*9.14. But to what end are they purged? *To ſerue the liuing God.* Therefore mark, that till the Conſcience bee *purged* and made good, there is no *ſeruing of God.* So *He.* 10.22. *Let vs draw neer*, that is, in prayer, and the like duties; But how? *Hauing our hearts ſprinkled from an euill Conſcience.* Otherwiſe it is but a folly for vs to draw neere, for God will not be near when a good conſcience is far off. And therefore we are bid to *purifie our hearts*, when we are bid *draw nigh* to God, *Iam.*4.8.

Behold here then a ſpecial motiue to make a good Conſcience beautifull in our eye. As we would be loath our ſeruices of God, our prayers & holy performances, ſhould bee abominable in Gods eye, ſo labor for good conſciences. As we would haue comfort in all our duties of obedience, ſo labour to make our cõſcience good. It is a great

deale of confidence that ſilly ignorant ones haue in their *good prayers*, & their *good ſeruing* of God, as they call it, yea it is all the ground of their hope of ſaluation, when they are demanded an account of their hope: Now alas your good prayers, & your good ſeruing of God! Why what doe you talking of theſe things? Hath Chriſt *purged your Conſciences from dead workes?* Haue you by faith got your *conſciences ſprinkled*, and rinced in Chriſts blood, and ſo haue ye made them good? If not, neuer talke of *good prayers*, and *good ſeruing* of God: your prayers cannot bee good whileſt your Conſciences are naught. An *euill conſcience* before God, and a *good ſeruice* to God cannot ſtand together. But would you haue your *prayers good* indeed, and your ſeruice acceptable indeed? Then let your firſt care be to make your *Conſcience good.*

The fourth motiue to a good cõſcience.

Fourthly, let this worke with vs as a maine *motiue* to a good Conſcience: That it is the *Ship* & the *Arke* wherein the *faith* is preſerued. The faith is a rich com-

commodity, a precious fraught, and a good conſcience is the bottome, and the veſſel wherein it is caried. So long as the ſhip is ſafe and good, ſo long the goods therein are ſafe; but if the Ship ſplit vpon the Rockes, or haue but a leake therein, then are all the goods therein in danger of being loſt and caſt away. So long as a man keepes a good Conſcience, there is no feare of loſing th e faith, the integrity and ſoundneſſe of the doctrine thereof. *Conſtancy* in the truth, is a fruit of good conſcience. *Pſal.* 119.54.55. *I haue kept thy law*; he had not declined from, nor forſaken the truth of God, but what held and kept him? *This I had, becauſe I kept thy precepts.* Keeping of a good conſcience will keepe a man in the truth: It is that which is the holy preſeruatiue to ſaue from all errors, hereſies, and falſe doctrines. The better Conſcience, the ſounder iudgement, the ſounder heart, the ſounder head. As the better digeſtion in the ſtomach, the freer the head is from aſcendent fumes that would

diſtemper and trouble the ſame, *Iohn* 7. 17. *If any man will doe his will, he ſhall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.* How ſhal a man come to haue a ſound and a good iudgement, to bee able to iudge what is truth, and what is not? Let him get a good Conſcience, and make Conſcience of *doing the will of God, Iohn.* 14. 21. *He that hath my commandements and keepes them, &c.* ſuch a man hath, & keepes a good Conſcience. And what benefit ſhal ſuch a one haue by keeping of a good conſcience? *I will loue him, and I will manifeſt my ſelfe vnto him.* And *Pſ.* 50. 23. *To him that orders his conuerſation aright, will I ſhew the ſaluation of God.* God doth communicate himſelfe & his truth to ſuch as make cõſcience of their waies. The pure in heart ſhall ſee God, and the ſecret of the Lord is with them that feare him.

So that he that hath a good Conſcience, hath the only Antidote, the moſt excellent Amulet and plague-cake at his breſt that is in the world, to ſaue him

him from the peſtilence, and infection of Popery, Arminianiſme, Browniſme, Anabaptiſme, &c. So long as the ſhip of Conſcience is whole, ſo long the Iewell of faith is ſafe. *Paul* would haue a Biſhop *to hold faſt the faithfull Word*, and to be ſound in doctrine, *Tit.* 1. 9. But yet marke it, that hee would firſt haue him bee a man of a good Conſcience, in the two foregoing verſes. And 1. *Tim.* 3. 9. he would haue the Deacons *hold the myſtery of the faith in a pure Conſcience.*

Contrarily, nothing ſo endangers the loſs of the faith & truth, & ſoundneſſe of doctrine, as doth the loſſe of good Conſcience. A corrupt Conſcience ſoone corrupts the iudgement, 1. *Tim.* 1. 19. *Holding faith and a good Conſcience, which ſome hauing put away, concerning faith haue made ſhipwrack.* If the ſhip of conſcience cracke, how ſoone will the merchandiſe of faith wrack? If once the conſcience cracke, the braine will ſoone proue crazie; and an vnſound conſcience makes a feare-

fearefull way for an vnſound and a rotten iudgement. 2. *Tim.* 3. 8. *They reſiſt the truth*, there is their corrupt Conſcience: what followes vpon it? *Men of corrupt mindes*, vnſound in their iudgement concerning the faith. How frequent a thing is it in experience to ſee men when they loſe good Conſcience, together with it either to *loſe their gifts*, as the vnprofitable ſeruant his maſters talent, or elſe, to *loſe the truth*, and to fall into peſtilent & dangerous errors. So thoſe Prophets that made not conſcience in faithfull and holy execution of their office, ſee what was the fruit of their euill Conſcience, *Mic.* 3. 5. 6. 7. *Therefore night ſhall bee vnto you that yee ſhall not haue a viſion, and it ſhall bee darke vnto you that yee ſhall not diuine, and the Sunne ſhall goe down ouer the Prophets, and the day ſhall bee darke ouer them, &c.* Their darkeneſſe in life ſhould bee plagued with darkeneſſe in iudgement. To which purpoſe that is notable, *Zach.* 11. 17. *Woe to the idoll ſhepheard that leaues the flocke*

flocke. There is an vnconſcionable ſhepheard, a man that makes no Conſcience to attend his miniſtery. What becomes of him? *The ſword ſhall bee vpon his right eye,* his beſt eye. *And his right eye* (ſhall not be pore-blinde, or dimmed, but) *ſhall bee vtterly darkened.* The loſſe of good Conſciences brings vpon men of knowledge and learning that reproach that *Nahaſh* the Ammonite would haue brought vpon all Iſrael, 1. *Sam.* 11. 2. It thruſts out their *right eies.* Ill Conſciences not onely make men looke a ſquint, but it blinds them, and takes away their ſight.

And what is the reaſon that Popery gets ground ſo faſt, and ſo many turne Papiſts ſo eaſily? Surely it is no wonder, how ſhould it be otherwiſe, when men either hauing loſt all good Conſcience, or making no Conſcience of their wayes, but liuing looſely, vitiouſly, and licentiouſly, haue thereby prepared a way for Antichriſt and his religion, to enter withall ſucceſſe.

No

No wonder that men turne Papiſts ſo faſt, when long ſince they haue turned good Conſcience going. For that which *Bellarmine* ſpeaks, is in the generall certainly true, though by him falſly, and maliciouſly applyed, That they bee not holy and graue men, but wicked, light, curious, wanton ones, that turne Ethnicks, or Hereticks, and that it ſeldome comes to paſſe, that any man makes ſhipwrack concerning the faith, that firſt makes not ſhipwracke cõcerning manners. See the truth of it in many of our backſliders to popery, eſpecially ſuch as haue beene zealous propugners of the truth. Where began the firſt declenſion, where the firſt flawe? Had not their conſciences firſt bruſht vpon ſome rocke? was not the firſt leake there? and when they had firſt put away good Conſcience, then there was a ſpeedy baniſhing of truth, and a ready entertainement of errour. And for the common ſort of their conuerts, conſider if many times they haue not bin the very riffe-raffe of our Church

Cum ariæ ventilari incipiunt, non frumenta ſed paleæ vento abripiente ſeparantur ab area. Ita prorſus cum Eccleſia per Ethnicorum perſecutiones, vel Hæreticorum deceptiones, Deo permittente cribratur, aut ventilatur à Satana: non veri ſancti, & ganes, ſed improbi leues, curioſi, laſciui ab Eccleſia auolantes ad Ethnicos hæreticoſue tranſfugi-

Church, ſwearers, groſſe profaners of the Sabbath, vncleane and debauched drunkards, ſuch as our Church was ſick of, and deſired euen to ſpue forth, and then when they haue become a pery to all vicious courſes, through want of Conſcience, thorow Gods iuſt iudgement they haue become a prey to *Romiſh locuſts*, whoſe cõmiſſion is *onely to hurt ſuch*, & not thoſe whom the ſap of a good Conſcience keepes freſh & flouriſhing as the green graſſe, and trees of the earth, *Apoc.* 9.4. For as *Salomon* ſpeakes of the bodily harlot, *Eccleſ.* 7. 26. ſo it is true of that ſpirituall whore of Babylon. *Her heart is ſnares and nets, her hands as bands*, her deluſions ſtrongs; *who ſo pleaſes God*, and hath a care to keepe a good conſcience *ſhall eſcape from her, but the ſinner*, and hee that makes no conſcience of his wayes, *ſhall be taken by her.*

Well, let vs think wel vpon this motiue, we liue in dangerous & declining dayes, wherin men with a greedineſſe turne to their Romiſh vomit againe.

Beſides

nunt, nec fere ſolet accidere vt ante circa fidem aliquis naufraget, quam naufragere cæperit circa mores. Bellarm. Orat. prefix. tom. 4.

Beſides, the factors of Antichriſt are exceeding buſie and pragmaticall to draw men from the faith of Chriſt, and the Holy Ghoſt tels vs they ſhall come with *ſtrong deluſions*. Now then all you that be the Lords people, ſaue your ſelues from this dangerous generation, all you that haue, or would be knowne to *haue the ſeale of God on your foreheads*, ſaue your ſelues from the ſeduction of theſe *Locuſts*. I, but how may that bee done? The deluſion is ſtrong, and it may bee, we are weake. Lo then here is a remedy againſt their danger. Get, and keep, a good Conſcience, liue as *Paul* did, in all good Conſcience, and thou ſhalt be ſafe from all their deluſions, *I haue kept the faith*, ſayes *Paul*, oh! let it bee the care of vs, that that may bee our cloſing voyce at our laſt day, and if wee would *keepe the faith*, let vs *keep a good Conſcience*; Hee that in his life time can ſay, *I keep a good Conſcience*, he at his death ſhall be able to ſay, *I haue kept the faith*. Faith, and a good Conſcience are both in a bottome.

tome. Hold one, and hold both.

As therefore thou wouldeſt feare to turne Papiſt or any other heretick; ſo, be ſure to hold a good Conſcience, to hold on a good, honeſt, and a conſcionable man. So long as thou ſtādeſt vpon that ground, thou art impregnable, and the gates of hell ſhal not be able to draw thee from the faith of the Lord Ieſus. *Pro.6.20.22.44. My ſonne keep thy Fathers commandement, &c. And it will keepe thee.* So I may ſay here, *Keepe a good Conſcience*, and it will *keepe thee*, it will keepe thee ſound in the faith, it will keepe thee from being drawne away by the errour of the wicked, and it will keepe thee from the Wine of the fornications of the Whore of *Babylon*.

Chap. XV.

The laſt Motiue to a good Conſcience; The miſery of an euill one.

The fift motiue to a good cōſcience.

THe laſt *Motiue* remaines, and that is, The *horrour* and *miſery* of an *euill*

euill Conſcience. If men did but truely know what the euill of an euill conſcience were, and how euill a thing, and bitter it will bee when Conſcience awakens here, or ſhall bee awakened in hell, a little perſwaſion ſhould ſerue to moue men to liue in a good Conſcience. We may ſay of the euill conſcience, as *Salomon* ſpeakes of the drunkard, *Prou.* 23. 29. *Who hath woe? who hath ſorrow? who hath contentions? who hath wounds*, but not *without a cauſe?* Euen the man whoſe Conſcience is not good, euen he that liues in an euill conſcience.

An euill conſcience, how miſerable it is, we may ſee by conſidering the miſerie thereof, either *in this world*, or the *world to come.*

1. *In this life.* When an euill conſcience is awakened in this life, the ſorrow and ſmart, the horror and terror is, as the ioy of a good conſcience, *vnſpeakeable.* An euill Conſcience in this life is miſerable, in regard of *feare, perplexity, and torment.* To liue in a continuall

continuall *feare*, & to haue a mans heart alwayes in ſhaking fits of feare, is miſery of miſeries. And ſuch is the miſery of an euill conſcience. *Pro.* 28. 1. *The wicked flees when none purſues.* Onely his own guilt purſues him, & makes him flee. His owne guilt cauſes a *ſound of feare in his eares*, Iob 15. 21. Which makes him ſhake at the noiſe *of a ſhaken leafe*, Leu. 26. 36. yea, that ſo ſcars him that *terrours make him afraid on euerie ſide, and driue him to his feet*, Iob 18. 11. Yea, *there are they in great feare where no feare is*, Pſal. 53. 3. So that a man with an euill Conſcience awakened, may be named as *Paſhur* is, *Ier.* 20. 3. *Magor-Miſſabib, feare round about*, as being a *terrour to himſelfe*, and to *all his friends*, verſe 4.

An euill Conſcience, euen makes thoſe feare fearefull feares, of whom al other ſtād in feare. How potent a Monarch, and how dreadfull a Prince was *Belſhazzar*, who was able to put him into any fear, whom all the earth feared? And yet when his guilty Conſcience

Próprium autem eſt nocentium trepidare. Male de nobis actum erat, quod multa ſcelera legem & iudicem effugiant, & ſcripta ſupplicia niſi illa naturalia & grauia de præſentibus ſoluerēt & in dilatum patientiæ timor cederet Senec. ep. 91.

lookes him in the face, awakened by the palme writting on the wall, ſee where his courage is then, *Dan.*5.6. *Then the Kings countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, ſo that the ioynts of his loynes were looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another.* Who would haue had his feare to haue had his kingdome? Let him now cloath himſelfe with all his Maieſty, let him looke and ſpeake as terribly as he can, let him threaten the vileſt vaſſall in his Court, with al the tortures that tyranny can inflict, and let him try if he can for his heart put his pooreſt ſubiect into that fright and feare that now his Conſcience puts him into, in the ruffe, and middeſt of his iollitie. But I pray what ayles he to bee in this fear, in this ſo extraordinary a feare? He can neither read, nor vnderſtand the writing vpon the wal. Indeed it threatned him the loſſe of his kingdome, but he cannot read this threatning, he knows not whether they bee bitter things that God writes againſt him, why may he not

not hope that it may be good which is written, and why may not this hope eaſe, and abate his feare? No, no. Though he cannot reade nor vnderſtand the writing, yet his guilty conſcience can commẽt ſhrewdly vpon it, and can tell him it portends no good towards him. His conſcience now tels him of his godleſs impieties, in profaning the veſſels of the Temple of the true God, and that for this his ſacrilegious impropriation, and abuſe of holy things, God is now come to reckon with him. Thus can his Conſcience do more then all his wiſe men. *All the wiſe men came in, but they could not read the writing, nor make knowne to the King the interpretation therof.* Dan. 5. 8. But his Conſcience is wiſer then all his wiſe men, and when they are as puzzeld, that interprets to him, that thiswriting means him no good, and though hee cannot reade the ſyllables, yet his conſcience giues a ſhrewd neere gueſſe at the ſubſtance of the writing, and therefore hence comes that extaſie of feare-

and thoſe paroxyſmes of horror.

It was better with *Adam* after his fall. After his ſinne cõmitted, we find him in a great feare, *Gen.*3.8. 10. and he hides himſelfe for feare. Now obſerue how his feare is deſcribed from the circumſtance of the time. *They heard the voyce of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the coole of the day.* *Luther* layes the *Emphaſis* of the aggrauation of his feare, vpon this word, *the winde or coole of the day.* The night indeed is naturally terrible; and darkeneſs is feareful, whence that phraſe, *Pſ.* 91. *The terrors of the night.* But the day and the light, is a cheerefull and a cõfortable creature; *Eccl.* 11. 7. *Truely the light is ſweet, and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sunne.* How is it then that in the faire day light, which giues courage and comfort, that *Adam* feares, and runnes into the thickets? Oh, his conſcience was become euill, & full of darkeneſs, & the darkeneſſe of his conſcience turned the very light into darkneſſe, and ſo turned the com-

Grauis malæ conſcientiæ, lux eſt. Senec. ep. 123.

comforts of the day into the terrours of the night. So that in this ſenſe it may be ſaid of an euill Conſcience, which of the Lord is ſaid in another *Pſ.* 139. 12. Vnto *it the darkneſs, and the light are both a like.* As full of feare in the light, as in the darke. And beſides, the Lord came but in a gentle winde, the coole breath of the day, now what a ſmall matter is a coole winde, and that in the day time to, to put a man in a feare? Such ſmall things breede great feares in euill Conſciences. In what a woefull plight would *Adam* (thinke we) haue been, if the Lord had come to him, at the dead, and darke mid-night with earth-quakes, thunder, and bluſtring tempeſt?

We may ſee the like in *Cain.* After hee had defiled his Conſcience with his brothers blood, in what feares, yea, what idle feares liued he? Hee is ſo haunted with feares that though hee had liued in Paradiſe, yet had he liued in a land of *Nod*, in a land of *agitation*, yea, of trepidation. Iudge what caſe

caſe his euill Conſcience made him in, by that ſpeech, *Gen.*4.14. *It ſhall come to paſſe, that euery one that finds me ſhall ſlay me.* Surely there could not bee many yet in the world, and thoſe that were in the world, were either his parents, brethren, ſiſters, or neer kinred, his feare ſeemes to imagine multitudes of people that might meet him, yea, & that euery one he meetes would murther him. What, wil his Father or Mother be his executioners? What if any of his ſiſters meet him, ſhall they ſlay him? is not ſuch a ſwaſh-buckler as he, able to make good his party with them? Loe what fearefull, & terrible things a guilty conſcience projects.

As an euill Conſcience is miſerable in its *feares*, ſo in thoſe *perplexities* which this feare breedes. Theſe perplexities doe miſerably, and reſtleſly diſtract a man. *Iſ.*57.20. *The wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt vp mire & dirt.* What is the reaſon of theſe troubleſome perplexities? The want of peace of a

good

good Conſcience, *verſ.* 21. *There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* The windes make the ſea reſtleſſe, and ſtir it to the very bottome, ſo as the waters caſt vp mire and dirt. See in the troubled Sea, the embleme of a troubled Conſcience.

But the *Torment* exceedes all, & the main miſery of an euill conſcience lies in that. It is a miſery to bee in feare, a miſery to haue inward turbulencie, & commotions, but to be alwayes on the racke, alwayes on the Strapado, this is farre more truly the ſuburbs of Hell, then is the Popiſh Purgatory. Oh! the gripes, and girds, the ſtitches, & twitches, the throws, & pangs of a galling, and a guiltie Conſcience. So ſore they are, & ſo vnſufferable, that *Iudas* ſeeks eaſe with an haltar, and thinkes hanging eaſe in compariſon of the torture of his euill conſcience. All the racks, wheeles, wilde horſes, hot pincers, ſcalding leade powred into the moſt tender, and ſenſible parts of the body, yea, all the mercileſſe, barbarous, and

Pœna autẽ vehemens, & multo ſœuior illis. Quas & Ceditius grauis invenit & Radamanthus.

Nocte dieque ſuum geſtare in pectore teſtem. Iuuenal. Satyr 3.

and inhumane cruelties of the *holy houſe*, are but flea-bitings, meer toyes, and May-games, compared with the torment that an euill Conſcience will put a man to, when it is awakened. It is no wonder that *Iudas* hangs himſelfe, it had beene a great wonder rather if he had not hanged himſelfe.

Nolite enim putare quemadmodum in fabulis ſæpenumero videtis, eos qui aliquid impie ſceleratèq; commiſerint agitari & perterreri furiarum tædis ardentibus. Sua quemque fraus, & ſaus terror maximè vexat, ſuum quemq; ſcelus agitat, amentiaque afficit. Suæ

The *heathens* fabled terrible things of their helliſh *furies*, with their ſnakes & fierie torches, vexing & tormēting haynous, and great offenders. Theſe their *Furies* were nothing elſe, but the helliſh torments of guilty conſcience, wherewith wicked perſons were continually haunted, as ſome of the wiſer of themſelues haue well obſerued. All ſnakes and torches are but Idle toyes, & meere trifles, to the moſt exquiſite torment of a guilty and accuſing Conſcience.

The ſting of Conſcience is worſe then death it ſelfe, *Apoc. 9. 5, 6. Their torment was as the torment of a Scorpion when he ſtrikes a man; And in thoſe dayes ſhall men ſeeke death, and ſhall not finde it,*

it, and ſhall deſire to dye, & death ſhall flee from them. Popiſh ones tormented in their conſciences by the terrible and vncomfortable doctrines of ſatisfactions, Purgatory fire, &c. which thoſe *Locuſts* doe ſo terrifie them withall, ſhould rather chuſe death, than live in ſuch an uncomfortable condition: *The ſting of death* not ſo ſmart, as the *ſting of a Scorpion* in the Conſcience. The ſting of an accuſing Conſcience, is like an Harlot, *Prou.7.26. More bitter then death.* And as *Salomon* there ſpeakes of the Harlot, ſo may it bee ſaid of a tormenting Conſcience, Who ſo pleaſes God ſhall eſcape from it, but the ſinner ſhall be taken by it.

Gods deare children themſelues, many of them are not freed from trouble in their Conſciences, but they have their hels in this life, *Ion.2.2. Out of the belly of hell I cryed unto thee.* God for their triall ſpeakes bitter things unto thē, & not only denies them peace, but cauſes their conſciences to be at warre with them. Now when God puts his owne

aſſicit. Suæ malæ cogitationes, conſciencia-que animi terrent. Hæ ſunt impiis aſſiduæ, domeſticæque furiæ, quæ dies noctesque parentum pœnas à conſceleratiſſimis filiis repetant. Cicero pro Roſc. Amer. Suum quemque facinus, ſuum ſcelus, ſua audacia de ſanitate, ac mente deturbat. Hæc ſunt impiorum furiæ, flammæ, hæ faces. Idem. L. Piſon.

owne children to theſe trials, and diſquiets of Conſcience, they are ſo bitter, & ſo biting, that had they not the grace of God to vphold and preſerue them, euen they could not bee ſaued from dangerous miſcarriage. *Iob* was put to this tryall, and his Conſcience apprehended Gods anger, and we ſhal ſee what a caſe he was in, *Iob* 6.8,9. *O that I might haue my requeſt, and that God would grant me the thing I long for, euen that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that he would let looſe his hands, and cut me off.* Nay, worſe, *Iob* 14.15. *Thou ſcareſt me with dreames, and terrifieſt me through viſions, ſo that my ſoule chooſes ſtrangling, and death rather then life.* Gods grace preſerues his Saints from ſelfe-murder, but yet not alwaies from impatient wiſhes; *Iob* wiſhes *ſtrangling* & chooſes it of the two, but goes no further. What wonder then that *Iudas*, doth ſtrangle himſelfe, when his Conſcience ſtares him in the face, when as *Iob*, with whom God is but in ieſt in compariſon, *chooſes ſtrangling*. If *Iob* wiſh

wiſh it, what wonder that *Iudas* doth the deed. Conſcience doth chaſtiſe the godly but with whips, but it laſhes the wicked with ſcorpions. Now if the whips be ſo ſmarting to *Iob*, as makes him *chooſe ſtrangling*, what wonder that the ſcorpions bee ſo cutting, as makes *Iudas* ſeeke reliefe at an haltar.

Yea, and that which addes to the miſery of an euill conſcience, being awakened, it is ſuch a miſery as no earthly comfort can aſſwage or mitigate. Diſeaſes & diſtempers of the body though they bee terrible, yet Phyſicke, ſleepe, & reſt vpon a mans bed, yeelds him ſome eaſe, & ſome comfort. Some time in ſome griefes the comfortable vſe of the creatures, yeelds a man ſome refreſhments, *Pro.* 31.6.7. *Giue wine vnto thoſe that bee of heauy hearts, let him drinke, and forget his pouertie, & remember his miſery no more.* But Conſcience being diſquieted, findes no eaſe in theſe. *Darius* againſt his Conſcience ſuffers innocent *Daniel* to bee caſt into the Lyons denne. What cheere hath he

he that night? *He paſſed the night in faſting*, Dan.6.18. Not in faſting, in humiliation for his ſinne, but conſcience now began to gall him, and he having marred the feaſt of his conſcience, Cõſcience alſo marres his feaſting, none of his dainties will now down, his wine is turned into gall and wormewood, no joy now in any thing. He had marred the muſicke of his conſcience, and now he brookes not other muſicke. *The Inſtruments of muſicke were not brought before him.* His guilty cõſcience was now awakened, and now he cannot ſleepe; *His ſleepe went from him.* So *Iob* in his conflict for Conſcience hoped for eaſe in his bed, *Iob* 7.13. *My bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint.* But how was it with him? Either he could not ſleepe at all *verſe* 3.4. *Wearyſome nights are appointed unto me. When I lye downe I ſay, when ſhall I ariſe, and the night be gone? and I am full of toſſing to and fro unto the dawning of the day.* Needes muſt he toſſe, whoſe conſcience is like the Sea waues toſſed with

with the winds, or elſe if *Iob* did ſleep, yet did not Conſcience ſleepe, *ver.* 14. but even in his ſleepe preſented him with ghaſtly ſights and viſions, *When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me, then thou ſcareſt me with dreames, and terrifieſt mee through viſions.*

At other times when cõſcience hath bin good, Gods people through their dangers have beene great, yet neither the greatnes, nor nearnes of their dangers have broken their ſleep. *Pſa.* 3.5.7 *I laid me downe and ſlept, I will not bee afraid of ten thouſands of people that have ſet themſelves againſt mee round about.* And yet if we looke to the title of the *Pſalme*, *A Pſalme of Dauid when he fled from Abſolon his ſonne*; one would thinke *Dauid* ſhould have had little liſt, or leaſure to have ſlept. *Peter* thought to haue bin executed the next morrow by *Herod*, and though he alſo lodged betweene a company of ruffianly ſouldiers, that happily one would feare might haue done him ſome miſchiefe in his ſleepe, yet how ſoundly

ſleepes

ſleepes he that night. *Act.* 12. And holy *Bradford* was found aſleep, when they came to fetch him to bee burnt at the ſtake. Theſe fears brake not theſe mens ſleepe. How might this come to paſſe? They did as *Pſ.* 4, 8. *I will lay me down in peace and ſleepe.* He that can lie down in the *peace* of Conſcience, may *ſleepe* ſoundly, whatſoeuer cauſes of feare there be otherwiſe. But contrarily, he that cannot lye downe with the peace of conſcience, will find but little reſt & ſleepe, though his heart bee free from all other feares. Euill cõſcience being awakened, will fill the heart with ſuch feares, as a man ſhal haue little libertie to ſleepe. Oh the ſweet ſleepe that *Iacob* had, and the ſweet dreame, when he lay vpon the cold earth, and had an hard ſtone vnder his head for his pillow. An hard lodging, & an hard pillow, but yet ſweet reſt, & ſweet communion with God. A good conſcience makes any lodging ſoft and eaſie, but down-beds, and down-pillowes, if there bee thornes in the Conſcience,

are

are but beds of thornes, and beds, of nettles. The bitterneſſe of an euill conſcience diſtaſtes all the ſweetes of this life, as when the mouth and tongue is furred in an hot Ague, all meates and drinkes are bitter to the ſicke partie. This is the miſerie of an euill conſcience awakened in this life?

2. But it may be many neuer feele this miſerie here, there is therefore the more miſery reſerued for them in hell, in the world to come. Indeed more by many thouſands go to hell like *Nabal*, than like *Iudas*; more die like ſots in *ſecurity*, then in *deſpaire* of Conſcience, Death it ſelfe cannot awaken ſome conſciences, but no ſooner come they into hell, but Conſcience is there awakened to the full, neuer to ſleepe more; & then ſhe laſhes and gaſhes to the quicke, and lets men learn that forbearance was no payment. Tell many men of Conſcience, & they are ready to flap one on the mouth with that prophane prouerbe, *Tuſh, Conſcience was hanged many yeares agoe.* But the time

time will come, that they who have lived in evill Conſcience, ſhall finde the Conſcience which they haue counted hanged, ſhall play the cruell hangman, and tormentor with them. They ſhall find Conſcience unhanged, when it ſhall hang them up in hell, when day and night it ſhall ſtretch them there upon the racke.

The torments which an evill Conſcience puts the damned to in hell, are beyond the expreſſion of the tongue, and the cõprehenſion of mans conceit. There be two ſpecial things in the torments of Hell, wee have them both thrice repeated together, *Mark.*9.44. 46.48. *Where their* worme *dyes not, and the* fire *is not quenched.* There is an ever-living *worme,* and never-dying *fire*. And marke that in all the three verſes the *worme* is ſet in the firſt place, as it were to teach us, that the prime and principall torment in hell is the *worme,* rather than the *fire.* And what is the *worme,* but the guilt of an evill conſcience, that ſhall lie eternally gnawing and

and graſping, twitching, and griping, the heart of the damned in hell. Men talke much of hell fire, & it were well they would talke more of it; but yet there is another torment forgotten, that would be thought on too. There is an *Hell worme*, as well as there is an *hell fire*. And it may be a queſtion whether of the two is the greateſt torment. And yet no great queſtion neither. For as the Heauen of Heauen, is the peace and ioy of a good, ſo the very Hell of Hell, is the guilt and worme of an euill Conſcience. A man may ſafely ſay, it is better being in hell with a good cõſcience, thẽ to be in heauẽ if that might be, with an euill one. Heauen without a good cõſcience, what is it better thẽ hel? Paradiſe was an Heauen on earth, but when *Adam* haue loſt the Paradiſe of a good conſcience, what ioy did paradiſe and the pleaſures of the Garden afford him more, then if he had beene in ſome ſad & ſolitary Deſert? A good conſcience makes a Deſert a Paradiſe, an euil one turns a Paradiſe into a De-

ſert. A good conſcience makes Hel to be no Hell, & an euill one makes Heauen to bee no Heauen. Both the happineſs, & miſery of Heauen & Hell, are from the inward frame of the Conſcience. The Hell of Hell, is the worme of Hell, and that worme is the worme of an euill Conſcience, which if it bee not wormed out, and ſo the conſcience in this life made good, it will bee an immortall worme in Hell.

The helliſh deſpaire wherewith the damned are ouerwhelmed, comes rather frō this *worme*, then from the *fire*. Whoſe *worme* dies not, and whoſe *fire* is not quenched. The *fire* of Hell neuer quenches, becauſe the worme of Hell neuer dies. If the *worme* of Hell would die, the *fire* of Hell would go out. For if there were no guilt, there ſhould be no puniſhment. So that the very Hell of Hell, is that ſelfe-torment which an euill conſcience breeds.

Now then all this conſidered, how powerfully ſhould it moue vs to labor for a good conſcience. Thou that go-

eſt

eſt on in thine euill courſes, and hateſt to be reformed and reclaimed; bo but bethink thy ſelfe, if God ſhould awaken thy Conſcience, in what miſery thou ſhouldeſt liue here, what an Hell to haue a palſie Conſcience? what a Hell on earth to be alwayes vnder the accuſations, inditements, and terrors of Conſcience, and to liue *Caine*-like in a land of *Nod*, in a continuall reſtleſſe agitation.

But eſpecially as thou feareſt that euerliuing and euer grabbing worm, ſo haue a care to get a good Conſcience. Greene and raw fruits breed Cheſt-wormes, which if heed bee not taken will eat the very maw thorow. A dead body and a putrified corrupt carcaſſe, breeds wormes that lye gnawing at it in the graue. The forbidden and rawe fruits of ſinne, are thoſe which breede cheſt wormes in the Conſcience. The corruptions of the ſoule, and dead workes, are thoſe that breed this liuing worme, take heed therefore of medling with theſe fruits that will breed

Vt ex cruditate febres naſcuntur, & vermes quando quis cibum ſumit intemperanter, ita ſi quis peccata peccatis accumulet, nec deco quat ea pœnitentia, ſed miſceat peccata peccatis, cruditatem contrahit veterum & recentiũ

this worme, & get thy conſcience purged from dead works, get this worme killed with the ſooneſt, for if thou letteſt it liue till thou die, it wil neuer die at all, & will put thee to thoſe exquiſite torments, from which to be freed thou wouldeſt willingly ſuffer tenne thouſand of the moſt cruel deaths that the wit of man were able to inuent.

As then I ſay thou feareſt this *worme* of Hell, ſo get a good Conſcience, Drinke down euery morning a hearty draught of Chriſts blood, which may make this worme burſt. And when once this worme is burſt and voyded, & the cõſcience wel purged by Chriſts blood, take heed euer after of eating thoſe raw fruits that will breed new wormes. Lead ſo holy, ſo vpright, and ſo cõſcionable a life, that thou mayeſt not by thy freſh ſins clog thy Conſcience with freſh guilt. Get thy Conſcience purged by Chriſts blood, and thy conuerſation framed by Gods Word. *Thy words were found by mee, and I did eate them*, Ierem. 15. 16. Doe thou ſo, eate

delictorum igne aduretur proprio, & vermibus cõſumatur. Ignis eſt quẽ generat mœſtitia delictorum, vermis eſt eo quod irrationabilia animi peccata, mentem pungunt, & viſcera exedant, vermes ex vnoquoque naſcuntur tanquam ex corpore peccatoris, hic vermis non morietur, &c. Ambr. lib. 7. in Luk. c. 14.

eat no more the vnwholſome &worm-breeding fruits of ſinne; but *drinke* Chriſts blood, and *eate* Gods word, and they both ſhall purifie and ſcoure thy Conſcience from all ſuch ſtuffe, as may breed and feed the Hell-worme of an euill Conſcience.

CHAP. XVI.

The portion and reſpect that a good Conſcience findes in the world.

AND thus haue we hitherto ſeene *Paules Proteſtation.* The ſecond point followes, namely, *Ananias* his inſolent & impetuous *Iniunction.* Verſe 2. *And the high Prieſt Ananias commanded them that ſtood by him, to ſmite him on the mouth.*

Paul had begun his defence in the former verſe, and that by authoritie & ſpeciall command, as appeares in the former Chapter, at the 30. verſe. But he had no ſooner begun, but hee is interrupted and cut off, and hath not on-

ly his mouth ſtopt, but ſtopt with *Ananias* fiſt, *He commanded to ſmite him on the mouth.* Out of which carriage and violence of his, we may obſerue diuers things. Firſt learne;

What is the *Reward and portion of a good conſcience from the world.* It is the portion of a good Conſcience full oft to be ſmitten, either on the mouth, or with the mouth. Blowes either with the fiſt, or with the tongue. *To be ſmitten* one way or other, is full often the lot of a good Conſcience. *Smite him on the mouth*, ſayes *Ananias*. But let vs a little expoſtulate the matter with *Ananias*. *Smite him on the mouth?* But yet as *Pilate* ſpeakes in Chriſts caſe, *But what euill hath he done?* or what euill hath he ſpoken? *Smite him on the mouth?* But as our Sauiour anſwers, *Ioh.* 18.23. *If he haue ſpoken euill, take witneſſe of the euill*, and proceed legally and formally: *If he haue ſpoken well*, or no manner of euill, *why cõmandeſt thou him to be ſmitten?* What, hath he ſpoken any treaſon againſt *Cæſar*, or the Romane gouern-

ment?

ment? If he haue, then as the towne-clark of *Epheſus* ſpeaks, *Act.* 19.38. *The law is open, & there are Deputies*, let thē accuſe him; & bring him to his anſwer. It is a baſe vſage of any ingenuous perſon, to bee ſmitten on the mouth in a Court of Iuſtice, a diſhonorable vſage of a Romane. Surely it ſhould ſeem by ſuch baſe & bitter vſage, that *Paul* hath ſome way or other foully forgotten & ouer-ſhot himſelf, that *Ananias* his ſpirit is thus embittered and prouoked againſt him. What, hath *Paul* giuen him any exaſperating & diſgraceful terms, hath he giuē him any open & perſonall girds, before the whole Councell? No, no: No ſuch matter at all. Why what thē is the matter that *Paul* muſt be thus baſely & thus deſpitefully vſed? Will ye know the cauſe? *Men & brethren, I haue liued in all good conſcience*. Loe here is the quarrell. He hath made a profeſſion of a good Conſcience, and for his good conſcience ſake are *Ananias* fiſts about his eares. There is nothing ſo mads men of wicked Conſciences, as

the profeſſion and practice of a good conſcience doth. The very name and mention of a good conſcience makes *Ananias* halfe mad, & like one beſides himſelfe, he falles not onely to foule words, but to blowes alſo, and *Paul* muſt haue on the mouth for his good conſcience ſake.

Paul might haue blaſphem'd the bleſſed name of Chriſt, and rayled vpon the odious Sect of the Nazarens, hee might haue beene a drunkard, an adulterer, or a murtherer, and none of all theſe things, would haue ſtirred *Ananias* his blood, for none of all theſe ſhould *Paul* haue beene ſmitten; but let him but once ſpeake, or treat of, or any way meddle with good Conſcience, and *Ananias* his blood is preſently vp, he cannot holde his hands, but *Paul* muſt haue on the mouth, there is no remedy. So odious a thing is good Conſcience and the profeſſion of it to wicked men. Therefore this is that which a good Conſcience muſt expect, euen *Ananias* his dole, fiſts, blowes,

blowes, ſmiting, hard and iniurious meaſure, from the world.

This is no new thing. It was our Sauiours caſe before is was *Pauls*, *Ioh.* 18. 22. *And when he had thus ſpoken, one of the officers which ſtood by ſtroke Ieſus with the palme of his hand, &c.* Lu. 22. 63. 64. *And the men that held Ieſus, mocked him, and ſmote him, And when they had blinfolded him, they ſtroke him on the face.* He felt the weight of their fiſts for the ſame quarrell that *Paul* did. So it was fore-prophecied of him, *Iſ.* 50. 6. *I gaue my backe to the ſmiters, and my cheekes to them that plucked off the haire.* It was the kindnes that *Zidkiah* could afford *Micaiah*, 1. *King.* 22. 24. *Hewent neere & ſmote Micaiah on the cheek*, & it was the thanks the Prophet was like to haue for the diſcharge of a good cõſciẽce. 1. *Ch.* 25. 16. *Forbeare, why ſhouldeſt thou bee ſmitten?* It is that of which *Iob* cõplained ſo long ſince, *Io.* 16. 10. *Mine enemy ſharpens his eyes vpon me, they haue gaped vpon mee with the mouth, they haue ſmitten me vpon the cheeke reproachfully.*

The

The ſame portion did the Prophet *Ieremy* meet withal, *Ier.*20.2. *Then Paſhur ſmote Ieremiah the Prophet.* What was the quarrell? That in the former verſ. *He heard that Ieremiah had prophecied theſe things.* Onely for diſcharging his conſcience, for the conſcionable diſpenſation of Gods truth. And as ſometime they ſmote him on the mouth, ſo ſometime they ſmote him with the mouth. *Ier.*18. 18. *Come let vs deuiſe deuices againſt Ieremiah, come let vs ſmite him with the tongue, and let vs not giue heed to any of his words.* And why would they ſmite him with the tongue? Onely for his conſcience, and fidelity in his Miniſtery.

There is mention made of two falſe Prophets, againſt whom an heauy iudgemẽt is threatened, *Ier.*29.21.23. *Ahab* and *Zedekiah*, two baſe ſcandalous debauched perſons, who *committed villany in Iſrael, & committed adultery with their neighbours wiues.* The Prophet *Ieremy* he out of conſcience fulfils his Miniſtry, & ſee how light-fingred

fingred *Paſhur* is, hee hath fiſts for *Ieremies* face, and ſtocks for his heeles; but in the meane time *Ahab* and *Zedekiah* they may whore, and play the villaines, and they feele not the weight of his little finger. If his fingers muſt needs be walking, there is worke for them, there he may ſtrike, and ſtocke with credit. But there is no ſuch zeale againſt them. No ſuch dealing with them. *Zedekiah* and *Ahab* may bee in good tearmes of grace with *Paſhur*, whilſt *Ieremiah* muſt haue blowes on the face, & lie by the heeles. So wel can wicked men brooke villany, and any wretched courſes better then they can a good cõſcience: *Paſhur* can better endure an adulterous whoremaſter, then an honeſt cõſcionable Prophet: villains may walk at libertie, whilſt a good cõſcience ſhal ſit in the ſtocks. Here then is the portion a good conſcience may looke for from the world. The better Conſcience, the harder meaſure. *For which of my good workes doe yee ſtone me?* ſaith our Sauiour, *Ioh.* 10.32. A ſtrange recom-

recompence for good workes, and yet oft-times the beſt recompence and reward that the world can affoord good workes, & a good Conſcience, ſtones and ſtrokes. And if ſo be that feare of law, and happy gouernment binde their hands, yet then will they bee ſmiting with the tongue: & if the law keepe them in awe for ſmiting on the mouth, yet then will they doe what they dare, they will ſmite with the mouth.

Vſe 1. A faire Item to all that meane to vndertake the profeſſion and courſes of good Conſcience. Doe as many doe in caſe of marriage, before they affect the perſon, they firſt conſider how they like the portion. So here, before thou meddle with good Conſcience, think with thy ſelfe what is her portion, and if thou like not that, it is but a folly to thinke of a good Conſcience. Doe as our Sauiour aduiſes, *Luke* 14. 28. Sit downe firſt and count the coſt, & whether thou be able to endure that coſt or no. *Ananias* hath a fierce ſpirit, and a foule

foule heauy fiſt, *Paſhur* is a club fiſted fellow, and the ſpitting adders of the world will ſmite their ſting deep. Suppoſe a good cõſcience may ſpeed better, as hauing the protectiõ of Chriſtian gouernment, yet this it muſt reckon vpon, and it muſt account of the hardeſt. Therefore thinke before hand before you meddle with it, how you can beare the fiſts & blowes of ſmiters if euer you ſhould come vnder them.

I may ſay here as our Sauiour did to the ſons of *Zebedeus*, *Mat.* 20. 20, 21. *Ye know not what ye aske. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I ſhall drink of, & to be baptized with the baptiſme that I am baptized with?* Many ſay they deſire to enter the courſes of good Conſcience, but doe not well know, nor well weigh what they deſire. Conſider with your ſelues, Are ye able to drink of the cup that a good conſcience ſhal drinke of? Can ye be baptized with the baptiſme that a good conſcience muſt be baptized with? Can ye endure the ſmart of *Ananias* blows? Can ye bear the load of

Paſhurs

Paſhurs club fiſt ? Think vpon this afore hand, & weigh it wel, this is that you muſt make account of, that will ſet vpon the courſes of a good conſcience.

Vſe 2. Is this the portion of a good conſcience, ſee then what a good meaſure of Chriſtian reſolution they ſhall need to haue, that take the profeſſion of it vpō them. Be ſhod with the ſhooes of the preparation of the Goſpell, *Eph.6.15.* Grow maruellous reſolute to harden thy ſelfe, & to harden thy face againſt al enemies fiſts, & blowes whatſoeuer, that though *Ananias* ſhould daſh thee on the face, yet he might not daſh thee & thy good Conſcience out of Countenance. Thus did our Sauiour, *Iſa.* 50. 6. *I gaue my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the haire, I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.* But how was he euer able to endure al this ? See *ver.7. I haue ſet my face like a flint, and I know that I ſhall not bee aſhamed.* So muſt thou doe that meaneſt to keepe a good Conſcience. Get a face, and a fore-head of flint, that enemies

mies may as ſoone cracke a flint with their knuckles, as by their violence & iniuries driue thee from a good Conſcience. Get an *Ezekiels* face *Ezek.* 3. 9. Make thy forehead as an Adamãt, harder then a flint. Steele, & flint thy face with all heroicall reſolution. A face of fleſh will neuer endure, but a face of flint will hold *Ananias* fiſt tack, let him ſtrike while he will, he ſhall ſooner batter a flint with his fiſt, then ſtir a reſolued conſcience out of its ſtation.

Queſt. But beleeue me, theſe be hard things to vndergoe, who wil be able to abide ſuch hard meaſure, how therefore may one grow to ſuch reſolution, to abide the worlds fiſts, & the ſmart of their ſmiting?

Anſw. 1. Conſider that Conſcience hath fiſts as well as *Ananias*. 1. Sam. 24. 5. and 2. Sam. 24. 10. *Dauids heart ſmote him.* And what are *Ananias* his blowes on the face, to the blowes of Conſcience at the heart? One blow on the heart, or with the heart, is more painefull then an hundred on the face, and as

Reheboam

Rehoboam ſpeaks of himſelfe, 1. *King.* 12. 10. ſo Conſciences little finger is thicker, heauier, & more intollerable then both *Ananias* his hands, & loynes. Now then here is the caſe. If *Paul* will ſtand to his Conſcience, then *Ananias* his fiſts will be about his eares. If *Paul* doe forſake or flawe good Conſcience for feare, or for the fauour of *Ananias*, then will conſciences fiſts be about his heart. Now then if no remedie but a man muſt haue blowes, it is good wiſdome to chuſe the lighteſt fiſt, and the ſofter hand, and to take the blow vpon that part that is beſt able to beare it with moſt eaſe. The face is better able to abide blowes then the heart, and *Ananias* his blowes are but fillips to the clubbing blowes of Conſcience. We would ſcarce iudge him a wiſe man, that to auoid a cuffe on the eare, would put himſelfe vnder the danger of a blowe with a club. Here is that then that may make vs to compoſe our ſelues to patience, and to grow to an hardineſſe and a Chriſtian reſolution.

Better

Better tenne blowes on the face, then one on the heart. Better an hundred from *Ananias*, then one from Conſcience, that will lay on loade; let the world ſmite, yet mine heart ſmites not, yea, that ſtroakes and comforts, whileſt the world ſtrikes & threatens. Therfore being ſmitten in caſe of conſcience, rather then give out, do as our Savior bids in another caſe, *Mat.* 5.39. *Whoſoever ſhall ſmite thee on the right cheeke, turne to him the other alſo.*

2. Conſider that in the next Verſe, *God ſhall ſmite thee*, God hath ſmiting fiſts as well as *Ananias*. Let him ſmite, but yet there will come a time that God ſhall ſmite him: God will call ſmiters to a reckoning.

3. Conſider that of *David*, *Pſal.* 3.7. *Thou haſt ſmitten all mine enemies upon the cheeke bone, thou haſt broken the teeth of the ungodly*. God will not only ſmite the enemies of his people, but will ſmite them with diſgrace, as it is a matter of vile diſgrace to have a boxe on the cheeke, and he will give them

ſuch a *duſt* on the mouth as ſhall daſh out their very teeth; he will lay heavy & diſgracefull judgements upon them, as he did upon *Abſolom*, of whom *David* ſpeakes.

May it ever be thy lot to ſee good Conſcience under the fiſts of ſmiters, be not diſcouraged, ſtart not, ſtumble not at it. Be not ready to inferre; It is in vain to cleanſe a mans conſcience, and waſh his hands in innocency. But conſider, that this hath beene ever the worlds madneſſe, and the ancient lot of a good Conſcience, either to bee ſmitten with adverſaries hands, or varlets tongues.

Chap. XVII.

The impetuous injuſtice and malice of the adverſaries of a good Conſcience.

AS we have ſeen the entertainment a good conſcience meets withall in the world, ſo wee may here further ſee the inordinate violences that the enemies & haters of a good Conſcience are

are caried with. Therefore out of this inſolent Injunction of *Ananias*, wee may in the ſecond place obſerue:

The heady violence, and impetuous injuſtice of the adverſaries of good conſcience. Doct. 2.

Smite him on the mouth. A man would not imagine that hatred, and malice againſt goodnes, ſhould ſo tranſport a man as to make him run into ſo much, ſo open, ſo groſſe Injuſtice. Doe but examine the fact, and you ſhall ſee a ſtrange deale of injuſtice therein.

1. *Who is he that bids ſmite?* The high Prieſt. Hee had a better Canon to live by. *Mal.* 2.6. *He walked with me in peace and equitie.* So *Levi* walked, and ſo ſhould Gods Prieſts walke alſo. And that Canon of *Paul* for the Miniſtry of the Goſpell, held no leſſe good for the Miniſtry of the Law, That hee ſhould *not bee ſoone angry, no ſtriker,* Tit. 1.7. How haps it then that the high Prieſt is thus light fingred. *Smite him on the mouth?* Oh! ſhame that ſuch a word ſhould come out of a Prieſt, eſpecially the high Prieſts mouth.

2. *Who muſt be ſmitten? Paul* an Innocent. Foule injuſtice. Queſtionleſſe if *Paul* had offered ſuch meaſure but to *Ananias* his dog, to have ſmitten him for nothing, but out of his meere ſpight, *Ananias* would have judged him a dogged fellow. And will *Ananias* uſe an innocent perſon as hee would bee loth a man ſhould uſe his dog?

3. *Where muſt this blow be given?* In open Court, where they were all convened to doe juſtice. Still the worſe. If he had commanded him to have beene ſmitten in his private parlour, it had bin unjuſtifiable, but to ſmite him in open Court, and to doe injuſtice in the place of Iuſtice, this is deepe injuſtice. The place he ſate in, the grauity of his perſon, Gods high Prieſt, the ſolemnity of the adminiſtration of juſtice, all theſe might have manacled his hands, and have a little tempered and bridled his ſpirit. A foule indignity for the *Iudge of Iſrael to be ſmitten on the cheeke*, *Mic.* 5. 1. As foule an iniquity for a Iudge of *Iſrael* to ſmite on the mouth wrong-

wrongfully,& in an open Court of Iuſtice. What an indecent thing for a Iudge to goe to cuffes on the bench? What an intemperate and a vindictive ſpirit argues it? But what is the Indecency to the Iniuſtice? And what injuſtice to that which is done upon the Bench? Of all wormewood that is the moſt bitter, into which juſtice is turned.

4. *For what is the blow given?* For a good Conſcience. What? And hath Gods high Prieſt no more Conſcience then ſo, his place teaches him to be a protector, defender, & an incourager of good Conſcience. His whole office is matter of Conſcience, and will hee that ſhould teach, maintaine,& encourage good Conſcience, will he ſmite men for good conſcience? What is this but *Iſa.*58.4. *To ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſſe?*

5. *When is the blow given?* When he is beginning to plead his owne innocency, and to ſpeake in his owne defence. More injuſtice yet. Did not *Nicodemus*

ſpeake reaſon. *Ioh.*7.51. *Doth our law judge any man before it heare him?* Nay, if *Ananias* have no regard to Gods law, as it ſeemes he hath but a little, that wil ſmite a man for good Conſcience, yet what will he ſay to *Cæſars* law? *Act.*18.25. *Is it lawfull for you to ſcourge,* and ſo to ſmite, *a man that is a Roman and uncondemned,* and unheard? To judge & condemne a man unheard, is deepe Injuſtice, but farre deeper to puniſh, and execute him. Will he hang a man, and then trie him? Loe here indeed a right unrighteous Iudge, that feares neither God, nor man, that regards neither Gods law, nor *Cæſars.*

To have done by *Paul* as *Gallio* did, *Act.*18.14.16. Whē *Paul* was about to open his mouth, to drive him and the reſt from the judgement-ſeat, this had bin injuſtice, but when *Paul* opens his mouth to ſpeake for himſelfe, for *Ananias* to ſtop his mouth, & to ſtop it wth his fiſts, to ſtop his mouth, & ſmite him on the mouth both, when hee was to ſpeake in his owne defence, what greater

ter depth of Injuſtice can we imagine? An hũdred to one but *Ananias* was one of the Sanhedrim, which at the time when the officers not having apprehẽded Chriſt, fell a curſing the people, *Ioh.7.49. This people that knowes not the law is curſed.* Vpon which ſpeech *Nicodemus* ſeems to meet kindly with them *v.51. Doth our law judge any man before it heare and know what he doth?* As if hee had ſaid, Doe you glory in the knowledge of the law, and are they curſed that know not the law, what then are they that knowing the law go directly againſt it? Are the people, *Ananias*, curſed that know not the law, what art thou thy ſelfe then who knoweſt both Gods law and *Cæſars*, and yet through malice againſt *Paul* ſinneſt againſt both? Vnjuſt and malicious proceedings, God will not let them have the honour ſo much as of the colour of formality, and legality in their courſes But they ſhall be ſo caried, that the madnes & malice of thẽ, may lie manifeſtly opẽ to the view of all the world.

6. *By what authority is the blow given?* *Ananias* commanded them. Yea but *Mal.* 2. 7. *The Prieſts lips ſhould preſerve knowledge, and they ſhould ſeeke the law at his mouth.* And ſhould they that ſhould ſeeke the law at his mouth, againſt all law at his command, ſmite men on the mouth? It was too much that *Gallio* did, and the holy Ghoſt leaves a deepe diſgrace upon him for it, *Acts* 18. that he would ſuffer others to ſmite *Soſthenes*, and *not to care for it.* It was too much that *Ahab* ſuffers *Zidkiah* to ſmite *Micaiah*, and to breake the kings peace in the kings preſence, he ſhould have condemned him at leaſt to loſe his hand, for ſtriking before the King. But here is a worſe matter, he not only ſuffers it, but commands it to bee done. *Ananias commanded* to ſmite. Vnjuſtice *ſuffered* by authority is too much, but unjuſtice *commanded* by authority, that is farre worſe.

Vſe. 1. *Nonest crudelior in orbe terrarum ira,*

It ſhewes the truth of *Pauls* phraſe, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 2. *Vnreaſonable men*, or *abſurd* men, Malice againſt the truth and the Goſpell,

Goſpell, ſo hurries adverſaries, that it tranſports them beyond all bounds of common equitie, common honeſty, the gravity, of their perſons, & places; ſo as neither law of God, nor law of man can reſtraine their violence, and impetuouſneſſe. No bounds can keepe a malicious ſpirit within compaſſe. It makes men forget common civility, and carries men beyond all *Decorum*, even that *Decorum* their place and office calls for. *Bonner* cannot content himſelfe to judge, & condemne Gods ſervants to the fire, it ſatisfies him not to be their judge, but he muſt be taking the Beadles, or the Hangmans office out of his hand too, and muſt be whipping them with his owne hands; And malicious *Story* forgetting the gravity of his Doctorſhip, muſt be throwing Fagots at the faces of the Martyres, when bound to the ſtake to bee burned. What is to be *abſurd* and *unreaſonable*, if this be not? Murtherers, and bloody cut-throats ſhall finde more legall and formal proceedings at their hands

quã Eccleſia ſanguinaria & hypocritarum: Nam in politica ira eſt aliquid humani reliquũ. Nullus tam immanis latro ad ſupplicium rapitur, quin aliqua commiſeratione tanguntur homines: Sed cum falſa illa & ſanguinaria Eccleſia in filium veræ Eccleſiæ inciderit, non ſatis ei eſt effudiſſe ſanguinem, etiam maledicit, execratur, devovet, & in miſerum cadaver ſævit itaque ira falſæ eccle-

ſiæ, & furor phariſaicus eſt furor plane diabolicus. Luther in Gen. cap. 4.

hands, then the maintainers of the Goſpell, and Gods truth ſhall doe at their tribunals. To be ſure, *Barabbas* ſhall finde more favour, and leſſe hatred then *Chriſt*.

Vſe. 2.

Iudge by this what may be lookt for, if ever the Romiſh *Ananiæs* ſhould get head amongſt us again. *Ananias* his ſpirit lives ſtil in that chaire of peſtilence. If ever therfore we ſhould come under his fingers, looke neither for law nor reaſon, honeſty, nor equity, looke for nothing but the weight of his fiſts.

Thus have we ſeene the enemies impetuouſneſſe in this point, & wee may yet ſee a little more in the next. Therefore further in the third place obſerve.

Doct. 3.

Ananias commands to ſmite *Paul*. A falſe Prieſt to ſmite a true Apoſtle. Never doe Gods faithfull ſervants ſuffer harder meaſure then from ſuch. Who *ſmites Micaiah*, but that counterfeit Enthuſiaſt *Zidkiah*? 1 *Kin.* 22. Wel might he come in with his horns. They were emblematicall, and better ſignes

of

of the malice of his heart, then of the truth of his Prophecy. There bee no ſuch horned beaſts that puſh ſo dangerouſly againſt Gods true Prophets, as Satans falſe prophets are, *Ier.*20. *Ieremy* is buffeted and ſtocked, and who is the deed-doer? *Paſhur* the Prieſt. See *Ier.* 26.8.11.16. The Prophet finds more reaſon and faire dealing from the Princes, and the people, then frō the Prieſts and the Prophets. Theſe were fiercely bent againſt him, and nothing would quench the Wolves thirſt, but the Prophets blood. *Pilate* can finde no fault in Chriſt, yea ſeekes to deliver him; *but the chiefe Prieſts and the Elders perſwaded the multitude that they ſhould aske Barabbas and deſtroy Ieſus.* Mat. 27. 20. How woefull a caſe was it, that more Iuſtice and equitie ſhould be in an heathen *Pilate*, then in the Prieſts? How well would it have becomę them to have ſticked, and ſtood for Chriſt, if *Pilate* had ſought his life, rather then that an heathen ſhould pleade for him, whileſt thoſe that glory that they

they are the Prieſts of God, ſhould ſeeke the murther of Gods Son. What a pittifull caſe that *Pilate* ſhould be the Iew, and the Prieſts the Heathens? Therefore is *Pauls* Preface in his anſwer before *Agrippa* worth the noting. *Act.26.2. I thinke my ſelfe happy King Agrippa, becauſe I ſhall anſwer for my ſelfe this day before thee.* Why, what was *Agrippa*? He was an heathen man. Why then ſhould he thinke himſelfe happy to anſwer before him? Had hee not beene happier if he might have anſwered the matter before the high Prieſt? No; for *Agrippa* giveshim libertie to ſpeake for himſelfe, *Act.26.1 Then ſaid Agrippa to Paul, Thou art permitted to ſpeake for thy ſelfe.* But *Ananias* the high Prieſt layes him on the mouth, when having leave he begins to ſpeake for himſelfe. There is more hope of reaſon, and faire proceeding from heathen *Agrippa*, then from *Ananias*. There be no ſuch virulent, and violent enemies againſt Gods truth and ſervants as are degenarate, & counterfeit

feit friends,& amongſt thoſe ſtill they be the bittereſt, whom it behoved to bee the beſt. The bittereſt enemies againſt the Church,are thoſe within her owne bowells.

Ananias was an uſurper of the office of the Prieſthood, and marke how hee carries himſelfe in the place. He commands *Paul* to bee ſmitten. Vſurpers, commonly are ſmiters,and uſurpation is uſually attended with violence. Such as the entrance, ſuch the adminiſtration. We ſee it true in *Abimelech*,& *Athalia*. That as it is ſaid of Pope *Bonif.* the eight,that he *entred like a fox, raigned like a lyon, &c.* So was it with *Ananias*, he had a foxes entrance, he came not to the Prieſthood by an hereditary ſucceſſion, but as the faſhion then was by ſimony, bribery, and flattery, and now ſee how he raignes like a Lion, & commands *Paul* to be ſmitten on the mouth. An ill entrance into any place of office in Church, or Commonwealth , cannot promiſe any good in the adminiſtration thereof.

Doct. 4.

Integritas præſidentium eſt ſalus ſubditorum, principatus autẽ quem ambitus occupavit, etiamſi moribus,atque actibus non offendit,ipſius tamen initij ſui eſt perniti-

oſus exemplo: & difficile eſt ut bono peraganiur exitu, quæ malo ſunt inducta principio, ex Decret.

Doct. 5.

See what woefull times here were, what bitterneſſe, what madneſſe againſt a good Conſcience. And theſe were the times that did a little fore-run the fatall and fearefull ruine and deſolation of *Ieruſalem*, and the Nation of the Iewes. *Ananias* his deadly hatred of goodneſſe, and good Conſcience, was a bud of the fig-tree, that the particular Iudgement of Ieruſalem was even at the doores. *When the rod is bloſſomed, and pride hath budded, and violence*, ſpecially againſt good Conſcience *is riſen up into a rod of wickednes*, then may it truly be ſaid, *Behold the day, behold it is come, The time is come, the day drawes neere. Ezech.* 7. 10, 11, 12. By *Bede* deſcribing the ancient deſtruction of this kingdome of *Britaine*, this is made a fore-runner thereof, *The hatred of the profeſſors of the truth as of ſubuerters, all the ſpite and hate was againſt them.* Our Saviour tels his Diſciples, *Lu.* 21. 11. *of fearful ſights & great ſignes* that ſhould be from heavē, before the deſtruction of Ieruſalem. And ſo there was a fearfull

Odium in veritatis profeſſores tanquam ſubverſores omnia tela & odium in hos. Bed. hiſt. gent. Ang. l. 1. c. 14.

ful comet, and many other prodigious things before the ſame. Now if the Iewes had had hearts to have conſidered it, this cordiall malignity on every hand againſt good Conſcience was as ſad a Prognoſticator of their approaching ruine, as any blazing ſtar, or terrible ſight whatſoever. It is an ill preſage of a Nation going downe, when once good conſcience is fiſted downe.

Chap. XVIII.

The ſeverity of Gods juſtice upon the enemies of a good Conſcience, and the vſuall equitie of Gods adminiſtration in his executions of iuſtice.

THus have we ſeene *Paul* fiſted, and layd on the mouth. How doth *Paul* now take this blow at *Ananias* hands? He ſmites not againe, nor offers to repell one violence with another; he had learned of Chriſt rather to have turned his other cheeke to him. But yet though he ſmite him not with the fiſt, yet he ſmites with a checke and

and a iuſt reproofe for his violence. And ſo may a mā ſmite without tranſgreſſion, and without revenge. *Pſ.* 141. 5. *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall not breake mine head.* So may a man ſmite, and yet bee a righteous man. Theſe blowes are not to breake heads, as *Ananias* his blowes are, but theſe are to breake hard hearts. Thus *Paul* ſmites without tranſgreſſion of the bonds of meekeneſſe and patience. And ſo wee are now come to the third main point in the Text, *Pauls* zealous anſwer, and *conteſtation.*

Verſe 3. *Then ſaid Paul unto him, God ſhall ſmite thee thou whited wall.*

The conteſtation is contained in the whole verſe. And in this conteſtation we have a denunciation of judgement, and that happely by a Propheticall and an Apoſtolicall ſpirit, propheſying to him what ſhould befall him; not an imprecation out of a private ſpirit ſtirred with a deſire of revenge, *God ſhall* or *will ſmite*, not, I pray God ſmite, or I hope to ſee the day when God ſhall

ſmite

ſmite, but *God ſhall ſmite*. As if he had ſaid, Well *Ananias*, thou haſt ſmitten me, heare now what thy doome from God is, I am ſent to thee with heavy tydings: God will call thee to reckoning for this blow, and Gods hand is ouer thine head to pay thee in thine owne kinde. So then from the whole learne thus much.

Chriſtian patience though it binde a mans hands, yet doth it not alwayes bind a mans tongue. Though it lay a law upon a man to forbeare violence, yet layes it not a law upon him alwayes to enioyne him ſilence. Though a man in *Pauls* caſe may not ſtrike, yet hee may ſpeake. Though Religion pinyon a mans armes from ſtriking, yet doth it not ſow and ſeale up a mans lips from ſpeaking. *Ananias* hath ſmitten *Paul* on the face, and if it pleaſe him to have another blow, he will not reſiſt him, he hath his other cheeke ready for him, if his fingers itch to be doing; but yet for all this, though *Paul* hold his hands, he doth not hold his peace. Indeed *Chriſts* *Doct.*

precept is well knowne, *Matth.*5.39. *Turne the other cheeke alſo*, but yet for all that, ſee what his practice was when he was ſmitten, *Ioh.* 18. 23. Ieſus anſwered him, *If I have ſpoken evill beare witneſſe of the evill, but if well, why ſmiteſt thou me?* And yet his precept and practice doe not interfeire, nor croſſe ſhinnes. For though by his precept he forbids us to reraliate, or recompence injury with injury, out of the heat of a vindictive ſpirit, yet by his practice he warrants us in caſes of injury to make a manifeſtation both of our own innocency, and others injuſtice. Religion bindes no man to be a Traitor to his owne innocency, and the juſtice of his cauſe, and by ſilence to abet others injuſtice. With a good Conſcience may a man ſpeake, ſo long as he ſpeaks as *Paul* did before *Feſtus*, Act. 26.25. *The words of truth and ſoberneſſe.* So a man anſwer truely, ſoberly, without tackes of gall, and impatient touches of revenge. Chriſt and Religion ſay to a man convented, and injuriouſly proceeded

ceeded againſt, as *Agrippa* did to *Paul* Acts 26.1. *Thou art permitted to ſpeake for thy ſelfe.* This in generall, more particularly, in this Denunciation, Conſider the judgement denounced, that is this, *God ſhall ſmite thee.* From which we may obſerve two things, Firſt:

Doct. 1. *See Gods Iudgements, and the ſeverity of his iuſtice againſt the enemies of a good Conſcience, and his faithfull ſervants.* *Ananias* ſmites *Paul*, and for his good Conſcience, and what gets he by it? God will ſmite him, and give him as good as he brings. *God will ſmite ſmiters.* *Ananias* ſmites *Paul*, and God will ſmite *Ananias*; yea, and God did ſmite *Ananias*, for he was afterwards ſlaine by *Manaimus*, one of the Captaines of the *Iewes*.

It is a dangerous thing not to ſmite when God commands, 1 *King.* 20. 35, 36. He that would not ſmite a Prophet when God commanded, was ſmitten with an heavy judgement. It is no leſſe dangerous to ſmite when God forbids ſmiting, God hath an heavy hand for

thoſe that are ſo light fingred, and hee will give them blow for blow that wil be ſmiting his for a good Conſcience.

Touch not mine anoynted, and doe my Prophets no harme; Pſal. 105. 15. He that touches them, touches *the apple of Gods eye, Zach.* 2. 8. So he that ſmites them, ſmites the apple of his eye. The eye is a tender place, and ſenſible of a little blow. God will not take a blow on the eye, nor bear a blow on his face at the hands of the proudeſt enemies of them all, and though we muſt turne the other cheeke rather then ſmite againe, yet the Lord to whom vengeance belongs, will take no blowes at their hands, but if they wil be ſmiting, they ſhall be ſure to heare of him to their coſt.

You find *Exo.* 2. 11. an Ægyptian ſmiting an Iſraelite. It becomes none better then Egyptians to be ſmiting Iſraelites. *Moſes* ſpies an Egyptian ſmiting of an Hebrew. What gets the Egyptian in the end? See verſe 12. God ſtirs up the ſpirit of *Moſes* to ſmite him, and

and to ſlay him. Thus will God teach Egyptiãs to be medling. *Paſhur* ſmites *Ieremy*, *Ier.* 20. 2. What got hee by it? The heavy ſtroke of Gods hand upon himſelfe and all his friends *verſ.* 3, 4, 5, 6. *Herod* was a ſmiter too, *Act*, 12. 1. 2. *He ſtretched forth his hands to vexe certaine of the Church, & he killed Iames the brother of Iohn with the Sword.* And what became of him in the end? See ver. 23. *The Angel of the Lord ſmote him, and he was eaten up of wormes, and he gave up the ghoſt.* It is ſaid of *Ionas* his gourd that a worme ſmote it, and it withered, *Ion.* 4. That was much that a worm ſhould ſo ſoon ſmite the gourd. But when men will be ſmiting Gods people, and his Prophets for a good Conſcience, and when *Herod* will be ſo buſie as to ſmite Apoſtles, God can ſend not onely an Angell, one of his moſt glorious creatures, but even a baſe worme even one of the weakeſt creatures to ſmite *Herod*, and eate him both. *Ieroboam* ſtretches forth his arme againſt the Prophet, 1 *King.* 13. and his

arme withers, he doth but threaten to ſmite, & God ſmites him. How much more when *Herod* ſtretches forth his hand to vexe the Church, and to ſmite Gods Miniſters, will GOD not onely wither them, but ſmite him, as *Sampſon* ſmote the Philiſtims, *hippe and thigh*, and make him a rotten, and a ſtinking ſpectacle to al malicious ſmiters to the worlds end.

Thus is that true which the Prophet implies in that ſpeech, *Iſa.27.6. Hath hee ſmitten him as hee ſmote his ſmiter?* Marke then Gods dealing, he uſes to ſmite ſmiters.

Neither is this true only of ſmiters with the fiſt, and with the ſword, but it is alſo true of thoſe *ſmiters*, *Ierem.* 18.18. *Come, and let us ſmite him with the tongue.* Even ſuch ſmiters will God ſmite alſo, as we may ſee there, *ver.* 21, 22, 23. Thus God met with *Nabal. David* ſends for reliefe to him upon his feſtivall day, & he in ſtead of an almes falls a railing on him, and calls him, in effect, a Rogue, and a Vagabond,

and

and a runne-away. Thus he ſmote *David* with his tongue. What followes? See verſe. 38. *And it came to paſſe about ten dayes after, that the Lord* ſmoth *Nabal.* And how ſmote he him? *That hee died.* So *Zach.* 14. 12. *Their tongue ſhall conſume away in their mouth.* What might the reaſon be of that judgment? Becauſe happly many that cannot, or dare not fight with their hands, for feare of the law, yet fight againſt Gods Miniſters and his ſeruants with their tongues: Well, God hath a plague to ſmite ſuch ſinners. Though they ſmite but with the tongue, yet God wil ſmite them, and give them their portion with the reſt of the adverſaries of the Church. And if God will not ſpare ſuch ſmiters, how much leſſe will hee ſpare ſuch as ſmite with the ſword?

Terrour to all ſmiters, either with hand or tongue, Smite on, goe on in your malicious courſes, doe ſo, but yet know that there is a ſmiter in heaven that will meet with you. *Had Zimri peace who ſlew his maſter?* So ſaid *Iezabel* *Vſe* 1.

to *Iehu*, and ſo may it be ſaid in this caſe. Search the Scriptures, ſearch the hiſtories of the Church; Had ever any ſmiters peace, which lifted up eyther hand, or tongue, againſt any of the Lords people? Did ſmitets ever ſcape ſcot-free? Had they any cauſe to brag in the end? Had they ever any cauſe to brag of the laſt blow? Did *Herod* proſper that ſmote *Iames* with the ſword? did *Ananias* proſper that ſmote *Paul*? Did the *Egyptian* proſper that ſmote the *Hebrew*? Did *Doeg* proſper who was a *tongue-ſmiter*, as well as an *hand ſmiter Pſal* 52. Oh conſider this you that dare lift upon your hands and tongues againſt a good Conſcience, & be afraid of Gods ſmiting hand, tremble to meddle in this kind. Learne to hold your hands and tongues, unleſſe ye long to feele Gods ſmiting hand. Eſpecially take heed of ſmiting Gods Miniſters in any kinde, *Deut.* 33. 11. *Leuy* hath a ſtrange bleſſing, *Bleſſe Lord his ſubſtance, and accept the worke of his hand*, ſmite *through the loynes of them*

them that riſe againſt him, & of them that hate him, that they riſe not againe. God ſaw, that of all others *Levy* would bee moſt ſubject to the blowes of fiſts, and tongues, and therefore hee is fenced with a bleſſing for the nonce, to make ſmiters feare to meddle with him, or if they wil needs meddle, yet to let them ſee that it were better to wrong any other Tribe then that; God would ſmite them, and ſmite them to the purpoſe, that ſhall offer to ſmite him.

Vſe.2.

Here is that which may make Gods people comfortably patient under all the wrongs & injuries of ſmiters in any kinde. Here is that may make them by patience to poſſeſſe their ſoules, and may make them hold their hands and their tongues from ſmiting. Smite not thou, God will ſmite ſmiters. Indeed when wee will be ſmiting, we prevent Gods ſmiting, & ſo they have the eaſier blowes by the meanes: For what are our blowes to the Lords; Do as Chriſt did, 1 *Pet.*2.23. *Who when he was reviled reviled not againe; but committed himſelfe*

ſelfe to him that iudges righteouſly. It is beſt leaving them to the Lords hand. Pray for thy ſmiters, that God would give them ſmiting hearts, that their hearts may ſmite them ſo their ſmiting; pray to God if hee ſee it good they may bee ſo ſmitten. This is a revenge will ſtand with charity. Yet if not, leave them to God who beſt knowes how to ſmite ſmiters.

Vſe.3. It is great comfort againſt the ſore afflictions of Gods Church at this preſent. The enemies of the Goſpell have ſmitten Gods Church with a ſore blow. Well, yet et us not bee out of heart, the time will aſſuredly come, that God will ſmite theſe ſmiters. The time will undoubtedly come, when God will ſmite that whited wall, that Romiſh *Ananias*, that ſcarlet whore that animates and ſets a worke thoſe ſmiters. It was low with *David* when he fled from *Abſalom*, and was glad to receive reliefe from the children of *Ammon*. 2 *Sam*. 17.27. But cha. 18. *Ioab* ſmites *Abſalom* with three darts, and

David

David returnes in peace, and *Pſal.*3.7. bleſſes God for *ſmiting his enemies vpon the cheek bone.* How did the Egyptians oppreſſe and ſmite the poore Iſraelites *Exod* 2.11. and *Ex.*5.14? But at laſt *Exod.*12. God ſmites the land of Egypt, and the firſt borne, & *Ex.*15.6. *daſhes in pieces* theſe ſmiters. See how hard it went with *Iſrael*, 1 *Sam.*4.10. 11. *And the Philiſtims fought, and Iſrael was ſmitten, and there was a very great ſlaughter; for there fell of Iſrael thirty thouſand footmen, and the Arke of God was taken.* Behold what a terrible blow here was given: The Prieſts ſlaine, and the Arke captived, as if God himſelfe had beene taken priſoner, and yet at laſt, 1 *Sam.*5.6. God ſmites theſe ſmiters, *But the hand of God was heavy upon them, and ſmote them with Emerods,* yea as *David* ſings, *Pſalm.*78.66. *He* ſmote *his enemies in the hinder parts, he put them to a perpetuall reproach,* Hee ſmites them reproachfully. Sometimes he ſmites enemies on the cheeke bone, *Pſal.*3.7. Sometimes he ſmites them

them in the hinder parts, both are diſgracefull and reproachfull, but the later the worſe, a diſgraceful thing to be ſcourged and whipt like boyes. Antichriſtian ſmiters do prevaile, and happely may yet much more, and may give yet ſorer blowes, but yet as in *Nebucadnezzars* dreame, *Dan.* 2. 34. 35. the ſtone cut out without hands *ſmote* the Image upon the feet, and brake them in pieces, ſo that the iron, braſſe, clay, gold, all became *like the chaffe of the ſummer threſhing floores*; So will Chriſt in his good time ſmite theſe ſmiters, ſo that their place ſhall be no more found.

Doct. 2. *God ſhall ſmite thee.* Obſerve *the marvellous equitie of Gods adminiſtration in the executions of his iuſtice.* God fits his puniſhments to mens ſinnes. Here we ſee the truth of that, *Matth.* 7. 2. *With what meaſure ye meet, it ſhall be meaſured to you againe.* If *Ananias* ſmite *Paul*, God will ſmite *Ananias*. *Smiting* was his ſin, *ſmiting* ſhall be his puniſhment. *Paul* ſayes not, God ſhall judge thee

thee, or plague thee, but God *ſhall ſmite thee*, to teach that God doth not only juſtice upon ſinners, but that there is a *retaliation* in Gods juſtice, a recompenſing with the like. That looke as amongſt the Iudicials of the Iews there was a law of retaliation, *Eye for Eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand*; That if a man wronged another with the loſſe of an eye, he was not onely to be puniſhed, but to be puniſhed in the ſelfe-ſame kinde, to loſe an eye himſelfe; ſo the Lord for the moſt part followes the ſame courſe in diſpenſation of Iuſtice. If men *ſmite*, God will not onely puniſh, but *ſmite*.

That looke as it is in the caſe of obedience, ſo is it in the caſe of ſin. When men yeeld obedience to God, hee not onely rewards their obedience with a recompence, but with a recompence of *Retaliation*. Prov. 3.9. Honouring God with the increaſe of the fruits, is honoured from God with the recompence of the increaſe of the fruits. *Abraham* ſpares not his ſeed, therefore God

God wil multiply his ſeed, *Gen*, 22.16. 17. It was in *Davids* heart to build God an houſe, therfore God wil build him an houſe, 2 *Sam*. 7.2.5.11.

Thus it is alſo in the caſe of ſinne; this is the rule the Lord proceeds by often in his Iuſtice, to meet with wicked men in their kind. As *with the mercifull he ſhewes himſelfe mercifull*, ſo with the *froward hee will ſhew himſelfe froward*, Pſal. 18.25,26. And if men will *walke contrary* unto him, he will *walke contrary* unto them, *Levit*. 26. And he will croſſe them that croſſe him. And thoſe that will not hear when he cals, he will not heare when they call, *Pro*. 1. 24,28. For the better cleering of this point, we may ſee the truth of it in divers particulars.

1. Gods puniſhments are in the *ſame manner*. The ſame manner of ſinne, the ſame manner of puniſhment. *Ananias* ſmites *Paul* in a barbarous and a malicious manner, he himſelfe was cruelly ſmitten, and ſlaine. The ſinne of the *Sodomites* was a ſinne againſt nature, their

their puniſhment was after the ſame manner, fire deſcended from heaven. It is unnaturall for fire to come downwards. They ſinne unnaturally, fire comes downe unnaturally. The *Philiſtims* not onely ſmite *Iſrael*, but they doe it with a *ſpightfull heart*, & meerely for *Vengeance Ez.25.15.* Therefore *ver.17. I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes.* Vengeance for vengeance, māner for manner. Such was the late remarkable Iuſtice of *God* upon that popiſh Conventicle in the Citie, many of that crue were fallen from God and fallen from the truth; the Lord ſlaughters them by a fall. A fall was their ſinne, a fall was their death, there was a fall for a fall.

2. Gods puniſhments are in the ſame kinde. Looke in what kind the ſinne is, of the ſame kinde is the puniſhment. *Sodomes* ſinne was in fiery luſts, they were in their ſinne ſet on fire from hel. Their puniſhment was of the ſame kinde; God raines downe fire from heaven upon them. A fiery ſinne, and a fiery

fiery puniſhment. Memorable in this kind was the juſtice of God upon that notorious and fiery perſecutor *Stephen Gardiner*, who would not ſit down to dinner til the newes came from *Oxford* of the fire ſet to *Ridley* and *Latimer*; but before his meale was ended, God kindled a fire in his body, which ere long diſpatcht him, and made him thruſt his tongue blacke out of his mouth. Such was Gods juſtice upon *Adonibezek*, *Iudge* 1.7. in the cutting off his thumbes, and his great toes. *Threeſcore and ten Kings having their thumbes and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my Table.* As *I have done*, ſo *God hath requited me.* God hath met with me in mine owne kinde, he hath paid me with mine owne coine. Thus was Gods juſtice divers wayes upon the *Egyptians*. They threw the *Iſraelites* children into the waters, and ſtayned the waters with *blood*, therefore God turnes their waters into blood. To which that place alludes, *Apo.* 16.4.5.6. *And the third Angell powred out his viall*

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viall vpon the waters, and fountaines of waters, and they became blood. And I heard the Angell in the water ſay, Righteous art thou O Lord, &c. becauſe thou haſt iudged thus, for they have ſhed the blood of Saints and Prophets; and thou haſt given them blood to drinke. Where not onely the Iuſtice of God, but alſo the equitie thereof is magnified, not onely becauſe God had *iudged*, but becauſe he had iudged *thus*. Againe, the *Egyptians* deſtroy the males of the chrildrē, God meets with them in ther kind, he ſmites the firſt-born throughout all *Egypt*. The *Egyptians* drowne the *Iſraelites* Infats in the waters, God payes them in their kind, he drownes the *Egyptians* in the waters of the red ſea, there is *drowning* for *drowning*, and *waters* for *waters*. *Nadab* and *Abihu*, ſinne by fire, *and Leuit.* 10. 2. *There went out a fire from the Lord, and deuoured them.*

How many fires hath the Whore of *Babylon* kindled, wherin ſhe hath conſumed to aſhes the Saints of God, God

will plaugue her with an end suting with her sin, *Apoc.*17.16. she her selfe shall be burnt with fire. *They shall eate her flesh, and burne her with fire.* There is *fire* for *fire*, *Apoc.*9.12. she there darkens the light of the truth, with the smoake of heresie and superstition; *There arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoake of a great furnace, and the Sunne and the ayre were darkened by reason of the smoake of the pit:* And *Apoc.*18.9.18. There wee finde the *smoake of his burning.* There is *smoake* for *smoak.* God will make her *smoake* in the end that hath brought such a deale of spirituall *smoake* into his Church: & as that Emperour said, *Let him perish with smoake that sold smoak*; so hath she perisht with *smoak* at the last, that hath put out the eyes of so many thousands with the *smoake* of heresie and superstition. This was that justice of God which the Papists Powder-Martyrs, *Catesby*, and some others of them were forced to acknowledge, when they who had thought to have blowne up the State with *Powder*, were

Fumo pere-at qui fumum vendidit.

were themſelves ſpoyled with *Powder*, a ſparke of fire flying into it, as they were drying it, and preparing for their defence.

Such is that Iuſtice of God threatned, *Hab.2.15.16. Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drinke, that putteſt thy bottle to him, and makeſt him drunken alſo, that thou mayeſt looke on their nakedneſſe, Thou art filled with ſhame for glory, drink thou alſo, and let thy fore-skinne be uncovered, the cuppe of the Lords right hand ſhall be turned unto thee, & ſhamefull ſpuing ſhall be on thy glory.* A good place for drunkards to thinke upon, eſpecially ſuch whoſe glory is their ſhame, whoſe glory is to make others drunke. They ſhall have *cuppe* for *cuppe*, *nakedneſſe* for *nakedneſſe*, *ſpuing* for *ſpuing*. As they have made others ſpue and vomit, through oppreſſion by drinke, ſo will God give them ſuch a draught of the bitter dregs, of the cuppe of his wrath, that ſhall make them ſpue their very hearts out, as *Ier.25.27. Drinke and bee drunken, and ſpue and fall, and riſe*

no more, becauſe of the ſword which I will ſend amongſt you. Of this kinde was that Iuſtice of God upon *David* himſelfe. Hee killes *Vriah* with the *ſword*, therefore the *ſword* ſhall not depart, from his houſe; He defiles the wife of *Vriah*, therefore his Concubines are defiled by *Abſalom*. This is that Iuſtice, *Apoc.* 13.10. *He that leadeth into Captivity, ſhall goe into Captivity; he that killeth with the ſword, muſt be killed with the ſword.* It was the moſt righteous hand of God vpon *Saul*, that hee that put Gods Prieſts to the ſword ſhould fall vpon his owne ſword; & iuſt with God that *Elymas* the Sorcerer, that would have kept the Deputy in ſpirituall, ſhould himſelfe be ſmitten with bodily blindneſſe.

3. Gods puniſhments are oft in the ſame part, and member of the body, wherewith men have offended. That look as renowned *Cranmer* dealt with himſelfe at his Martyrdome; That hand wherewith he had ſubſcribed to the ſixe Articles, that hand hee firſt

firſt put in the fire, in an holy revenge vpon himſelfe; even ſo deals the Lord very often in his Iuſtice; That which men have made the Inſtrument of their ſinne, God makes the ſubiect of his Iudgements. *Abſoloms* pride, and his weakeneſſe, lay where *Samſons* ſtrength was. *Abſaloms* hayre was *Abſaloms* pride, therefore *Abſaloms* hayre, as it is conceived, was *Abſaloms* halter, and whileſt he will needs ſpare the Barber a labour, hee alſo ſpares the Hangman a labour. Such was Gods Iuſtice upon *Samſon* himſelfe. He can finde none to be the *pleaſure of his eies*, as the Prophet ſpeaks of his wife, *Ezek*, 24. but *Philiſtimes*, Iudg. 14. 2. 3. and Chapter 16. 1. and ſo in the love of a *Philiſtim*, *Dalilah*, he abuſes his eyes. What is the iſſue? At laſt the *Philiſtims* put out his eies. God puniſht the abuſe of his eyes with the loſſe of his eyes, and thoſe eyes that loved *Philiſtims*, were pluckt out by *Philiſtims*.

Memorable in this kinde was Gods

juſtice upon that French King *Henry* the ſecõd, who in a rage againſt a Proteſtant Counſellor, committed him into the hands of one of his Nobles to bee impriſoned, and that with theſe words, That *hee would ſee him burned with his owne eyes*. But marke the juſtice of God, within a few dayes after, the ſame Noble man with a Launce put into his hands by the King, did at a tilting run the ſaid King into one of his eyes, whereof he dyed.

Of this kinde was the Iuſtice of God upon *Zachary*, *Luke* 1. Offending with his tongue in that queſtion, *How can this be?* he is puniſhed with the loſſe of the uſe of his tongue, and ſpeech for a time. The rich gluttons tongue had denyed *Lazarus* a crum, therfore it is denyed a drop of water. The ſame glutton had abuſed his tongue in gluttony and therefore his *tongue* hath a peculiar torment in hel. So thoſe *Zac.* 14. 12 had their *tongues* conſumed in their *mouths*, like enough as with their hand ſo with their tongues they had fought againſt

againſt *Ieruſalem*.

Such was Gods Iuſtice upon *Ieroboam*, he ſtretches forth his arme againſt the Prophet, and the Lord withers it. He with his arme threatens to ſmite, & God ſmites him in his arme. Like that iuſtice which was done upon the Emperour *Aurelianus*, who when he was ready to ſubſcribe, and ſet his hand to an Edict for the perſecution of the Chriſtians, was ſuddenly cramped in his knuckles, and ſo hindred from it by the iudgement of GOD. *Euſeb. lib. 7 cap. 29.*

I may not here omit that notable inſtance of GODS Iuſtice upon *Rodolph*, Duke of *Suevia*, he whom the Pope ſtirred up againſt his lawfull Lord and Soveraign, againſt his Oath to uſurpe his crowne and Empire. This *Rodolph* in his Warres for the Empire, was wounded in the right hand, of which wound he dyed, and at his death acknowledged Gods Iuſtice in theſe words; *You ſee*, ſaith hee to his friends, *here my right hand*

wounded; with this right hand I ſware to my Lord Henry *the Emperour. But the command of the Pope hath brought me to this, that laying aſide the reſpect of mine Oath, I ſhould vſurpe an honour not due to me. But what is now come of it? In that hand which hath violated mine Oath, I am wounded to death.* And ſo with anguiſh of heart he ended his dayes. An example ſo much the rather to be marked, that men may ſee how God bleſſes the Popes bleſſings, and his diſpenſations with Oathes, eſpecially, when they are given to arme men to rebellion againſt their lawfull Soveraignes.

4. The equitie of Gods juſtice appeares in that, *Prou.* 26.27. *Who ſo diggeth a pit ſhall fall therein, and he that rolles a ſtone, it will returne upon him.* Such was Gods juſtice upon *Haman*, he makes a gallowes for his owne necke. Hitherto we may referre the juſtice of God, when God turnes mens beloued ſins into their puniſhments. Whoredome was the Levites Concubines ſin? *Iudg.* 19.2. and Whoredome was her

Videtis manum dexteram meam de vulnere ſauciam. Hac ego iuravi Domino meo Henrico ut non nocerē ei, nec inſidiarer gloriæ eius, Sed iuſſio Apoſtolica Pontificumque petitio me ad id adduxit, ut iuramenti tranſgreſſor honorem mihi indebitum vſurparem. Quis igitur finis nos exceperit, videtis quia in manu unde iramenta violavi mortale hoc vulnus accepi, &c.

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her death, *verſ.* 26. The Lord. *Deu.* 28. 27. threatens the *botch of Egypt*, & how frequently is the ſinne of uncleanneſſe ſmitten with the *French botch*, the fruit of the ſinne? How frequent are the examples of Gods Iuſtice upon drunkards: drunkenneſſe their ſinne, and drunkennes their death. And ſo that Proverbe is often verified, *Prov.* 5. 22. *His owne iniquitie ſhall take the wicked himſelfe, and he ſhall be holden with the cords of his ſinnes.*

5. The equitie of Gods Iuſtice appeares in this, when he makes *the place* of ſinne, *the place* of puniſhment. Wee have frequent examples of this in Scripture. This was threatned *Ahab*, 1 *King.* 21. 19. *In the place* where dogs licked the blood of *Naboth*, ſhall dogs licke thy blood. And this was made good, 2 *King.* 9. 26. In *Tophet the place* where they had ſlaine their Sonnes, and Daughters, would God ſlay the *Iewes*, *Ier.* 7. 31, 32. And as their *houſes* were the places of their *ſins*, ſo ſhould their *houſes* be the *places* of their puniſhment,

niſhment, *Ier.* 19. 13. And becauſe the Sabbath was profaned *in the gates* of *Ieruſalem*, therefore in the gates thereof would God kindle a fire, *Ier.* 17. 27. And remarkeable is that, *Ezek.* 6. 13. *Their ſlaine men ſhall bee amongſt their Idols round about their altars, and under every thick Oake*, the place *where they did offer ſweet ſavour to all their Idols*. Such was the Iuſtice of GOD in that late blow upon the Popiſh company. In the very place where they uſed to diſhonour GOD, the hand of GOD was upon them, they were ſlaine, and their carcaſſes cruſhed in the place of their Maſſe-worſhip, the firſt floore falling into their Maſſing place, & ſo they and their Crucifixes and Images, all daſhed together, God doing with them as with the *Egyptians*, *Num.* 33. 4. not onely ſmiting them, but alſo *executing judgement upon their gods*: yea, not onely ſo, but executed them and their gods, in the *ſelf-ſame place*, where GOD had been by them ſo much diſhonoured.

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6. The equitie of Gods Iuſtice is to be ſeen in *the time* of his puniſhments. God oft makes *that time* wherein men have ſinned *the time* of his judgements. At the time of the Paſſe-over did the Iewes crucifie Chriſt, and at the time of the Paſſeover was Ieruſalem taken. Heavy is the calamity that is befallen the Churches beyond the Seas, the time wherein the firſt blow was given is not to be forgotten. The firſt blow was upon the Sabbath, upon that day was *Prague* loſt. What one thing have all thoſe Churches fayled in more, then in that point of the religious obſervation of that day; That day they neglected to ſanctifie by obedience, upon that day God would be ſanctified in his juſtice upon them, and *in the time* would have them read one cauſe of their puniſhment. Neither is the time wherin God did that late juſtice upon thoſe Popiſh perſons to be forgotten. It is ſomewhat, that after their Roman accoũt, it was upon their *fift of November*, *God* would let thoſe of that Ieſuited

Ieſuited brood ſee how good it was to blow up Parliament houſes, and happily would have them learne more loyalty and religion, then to ſcoffe at our new holy-day.

Of this kind was Gods juſtice upon one *Leaver*, who rayling on the worthy Martyr and ſervant of Chriſt, Mr. *Latimer*, ſaying, *that hee ſaw that evill favoured knave* Latimer, *when hee was burned, & that he had teeth like an horſe*, his Son the ſame houre, & at the ſame time as neere as could bee gathered, wickedly hanged himſelfe. And the ſame was Gods juſtice ſeazing upon *Steven Gardiner*, the ſame day that *Ridley* and *Latimer* were burned.

Since then there is ſuch an equitie in Gods adminiſtration of juſtice, let it be our care and wiſedome to obſerve the ſame. Learne to comment upon Gods workes of Iuſtice, & to compare mens wayes, & Gods workes together. God is to have the praiſe and glory of his Iuſtice upon others, as well as of his mercy to our ſelves, now we ſhall then be

be beſt able to give God this glory, when we ſo obſerve his adminiſtratiõ, that we may be able not onely to ſay, The Lord is juſt, but the Lord is juſt in this, and that particular, when we can ſay, as *Revel.*16.5. not onely *Righteous art thou O Lord that judgeſt*, but righteous art thou O Lord that *judgeſt thus*. *Thus* they ſinned, and *thus* are they puniſhed. It is good to obſerve al the circumſtances of *Gods* Iuſtice, that ſo not onely the juſtice but the wiſdome and equity of Gods juſtice may be ſeene; and this is to trace the Lord by the foote: *Pſa.*68.24. Eſpecially we ſhould be thus wiſe in perſonall evills that befall our ſelves, that by our puniſhment, and the circumſtances thereof, we might be led to the conſideration of our ſinnes, and ſo might ſay as *Adonibezek*; *As I have done, ſo hath God rewarded me.*

Learne to give *God* the praiſe of his equitie as of his iuſtice. So doth *David* Pſ.7.15.16.17. *I will praiſe the Lord* according *to his righteouſneſſe.*

Tremble

Tremble and ſinne not. Take heede how and wherein we ſinne, leſt by our ſinnes we teach *God* how to puniſh us. Take heed of abuſing thy tongue in ſwearing, rayling, ſcoffing, leſt *God* lay ſome terrible judgement upon thy tongue here, or ſome peculiar torment upon thy tongue in hel hereafter. Take heed what meaſure thou meaſureſt to others, leſt thou teach *God* to meaſure the ſame to thy ſelfe. Take heed that thou make not thine houſe a denne of ſpuing drunkards, leſt *God* make thine houſe to ſpue thee forth: Take heede how thou uſe thy wits, thy ſtrength; take heed of ſinning in thy Children, or any thing elſe thou haſt, leſt *God* make the matter of thy ſinne, the matter of thy puniſhment.

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FINIS.